

Liberals threaten to quit E. German coalition

EAST BERLIN (R) — East Germany's five-party coalition government teetered close to collapse Sunday, rocked by an increasingly bitter row over the exact timing of reunification with West Germany. The Social Democrats (SPD) and Liberals, in the coalition seconded Christian Democrat (CDU) Prime Minister Lothar de Maiziere of fragmenting their 180-day rule rather than merge with Bonn before all-German elections, set for Dec. 2. The crux of the matter is whether East Berlin should accede to Bonn just after or just after the post-German poll — an apparently insignificant detail now the main domestic and external issues of reunification have been largely resolved. The Liberals want parliament to reconsider Sunday their proposal that East Berlin say now that it will accede to West Germany the day before the elections. De Maiziere is contradicting our coalition pact with his liberal partners.¹ Liberal leader Conrad-Michael Lehmann told Sunday's edition of the West German Bild am Sonntag newspaper, "If he doesn't shift from his position tomorrow (Sunday), the liberals will leave the coalition." Lehmann said, "And one thing is clear — we won't be going alone."

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Honecker 'too sick to go to jail'

BONN (R) — Former East German Communist leader Erich Honecker, under investigation for murder, corruption and misrule, is well enough to face questioning but not to go to prison, a West German newspaper said Saturday. Honecker, 77, recovering from cancer surgery at a Soviet military hospital in East Germany, was ousted by his own Communist Party shortly before a "people's power" revolution late last year forced the Communists to give up power. The former Stalinist leader could face murder charges over the gunning down of around 190 East Germans who tried to flee to the West over the Berlin Wall or across heavily fortified borders during his hard-line rule. Bild Am Sonntag quoted a report by a team of doctors asked by the East German government to determine Honecker's state of health as saying he could withstand short periods of interrogation in the presence of a doctor.

Sudan accuses Ethiopians of theft

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) — A senior government official Saturday said economic hardships were driving Ethiopian refugees to commit thefts and other crimes in eastern Sudanese cities. Yousef Bashir Saraj, governor of the eastern region, said despite the measures taken by his government to prevent Ethiopian refugees from leaving their camps to the cities, "some manage to flee the camps and commit night thefts, break into shops and carry out some robberies." Saraj said the number of Ethiopian refugees in eastern region has now reached about 1 million. He told the government daily newspaper Al Sudan Al Hadeth that the daily influx of refugees is 350. He called on the international community to provide assistance for the Ethiopian refugees.

GCC ministers discuss economy

NICOSIA (R) — Finance ministers from three Gulf states met Saturday to discuss boosting regional economic cooperation, the Oman News Agency reported. It said the meeting was attended by ministers from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman. "They exchanged views on the best ways to boost relations in the areas of finance and economy," the agency said. The three oil producers are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — an economic and political alliance that also includes the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Qatar.

Taiwan: Riyadh to announce switch in ties today

TAIPEI (R) — Saudi Arabia is expected to establish diplomatic relations with China Sunday and downgrade its ties with Taiwan, the island's Foreign Minister Fredrick Chien said Saturday. "We expect Saudi Arabia to set up ties with Chinese communists early Sunday (Taiwan time)," he told reporters. He said Taiwan's current economic and other ties with the kingdom would continue unchanged despite a change in the official diplomatic ties.

Bhutto wants tough action in Sind

KARACHI, Pakistan (R) — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has ordered Pakistan's security agencies to crack down on violence in her home province Sind, the official APP news agency said Saturday. Bhutto gave the go-ahead at a meeting with government officials in the provincial capital Karachi, called after six bomb blasts killed 43 people in Hyderabad last Sunday. "Show no fear or favour to any violators of law and ensure that criminals are brought to book," Bhutto urged law-enforcing agencies, APP said. Intermittent ethnic and political violence in Sind has claimed more than 1,500 lives since 1986, including more than 300 people killed since last May.

Lower House committee to study findings before decision on trials

4 ex-ministers cited in corruption probes

By Abdallah Hassanat
and P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporters

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Saturday decided to launch further investigations into four cases of possible corruption involving former ministers prior to deciding whether to press charges against them at a special court.

The decision came in the wake of findings by the prosecutor-general that there were grounds to prosecute four ministers on four separate charges. The findings were presented to the House Saturday under a constitutional stipulation that any case involving "ministers" — meaning serving or former cabinet members — can only be referred to the special court by the House.

The involved ministers, according to a copy of the prosecutor-general's report made available to the Jordan Times, are: two former ministers of public works (one of them named in two cases), and two former ministers of supply.

The two ex-ministers of public works, according to the report, are involved in a 1975 contract awarded to a local company to build the Swaqa prison. One of them is involved in the Al Jafra highway project which was awarded to an Indian company in 1987.

According to the prosecutor-general's findings, which mostly detailed the various phases of the contracts involved, the two former officials, acting in their capacity as ministers, violated provisions of the JD 586,207 contract awarded to a local company to construct the Swaqa prison.

These violations include:

— authorizing the use of prefabricated concrete blocks in building;

— failure to apply the contract provisions, resulting in a loss to the government (the amount involved was described as "huge.");

The net charge, according to the prosecutor-general, is "exploitation of public office," a crime which could be brought to court by the prosecutor-general if it had involved only official lesser in rank than a minister.

In the Al Jafra highway project, the prosecutor found that one ex-minister disregarded the recommendations of several technical committees, including the consultancy firm which carried out a feasibility study, and recommended to the prime minister that the contract be given to a combination of the two Indian companies at a cost of JD 35,916,159 in 1987. According to the prosecutor-general, the minister's insistence that the road be of reinforced cement, despite the fact that Jordan is not used to maintaining

cement roads, cost the treasury a loss of as much as JD 20 million in light of parallel offers for asphalt roads. Furthermore, it said, the project was not awarded after a tendering process, and there was no mention of any parallel offer. However, the report found that another Indian company had made an offer "at considerably lower prices" which would have saved the treasury around JD 7 million.

Again, "these, if proven, will constitute a crime of exploiting public office," the report said.

In the case involving one of two ex-ministers of supply, the report found that the minister's actions related to a contract to buy barley from Iraq had cost the treasury a loss of JD 802,340. The affair involved amendments the minister made to original contracts, which, according to the testimony he gave to investigators had the approval of his prime minister. However, the former prime minister as well as the then minister of finance who was cited as witness denied that such approval was given.

The fourth case, involving the second minister of supply, is also related to imports of barley from Iraq and Syria. The report of the prosecutor-general found that there was a difference of \$50 per tonne in the two contracts and that both prices were indicated for delivery at the country of origin.

The charge, if proven in a court of law, the report said, "is exploiting public office."

In another case, referred to in a

(Continued on page 4)

40 shot and wounded in Gaza refugee camp

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Violent clashes erupted for a second day Saturday in the Gaza Strip refugee camp of Rafah, over 40 people were shot and wounded in army gunfire in the occupied territories in a span of 24 hours, reports said.

On Friday, at least 36 Palestinians, ranging in age from 12 to 22, were wounded in stone-throwing clashes with troops in Rafah, near the Egyptian border, the reports said.

Friday's fighting came during a general strike commemorating the May 20 massacre of seven Arab labourers by an Israeli gunman. The assailant is currently being tried on seven counts of murder.

An army official said 12 Rafah residents were wounded Friday.

He said he was checking Saturday's casualty reports.

The official said an Israeli soldier was hit in the head by a stone in Rafah Saturday, and was hospitalised in moderate condition.

In other clashes, a five-year-old boy was wounded by army gunfire in Gaza City and two tec-

ners were shot and wounded in the West Bank town of Qabatiyah, Palestinian reports said.

Also Saturday, Israeli soldiers backed by helicopters raided the West Bank town of Beit Ummar north of Hebron and arrested 10 residents suspected of anti-Israeli activities, the army said. Palestinians said dozens of people were rounded up.

Dozens of Israelis held a vigil in front of the Adlit prison where seven officers and reserve soldiers are held for refusing to serve in the occupied territories, Israel Radio said.

Those refusing are members of "Yeah Gvul" (there is a limit), a group that assists conscientious objectors who refuse to serve in the occupied territories.

It was the highest 24-hour casualty toll in the Gaza Strip since a week of protests sparked by the murder of the Gaza labourers waiting for work in Rishon LeZion near Tel Aviv May 20.

Troops and demonstrators clashed throughout the Strip Friday but all the wounded were in Rafah refugee camp where two

weeks ago military sources had said the army was keeping a low profile as a new tactic to avoid clashes.

Palestinians said protests began in Rafah when jeep patrols in the camp were attacked by stone-throwing youths.

A group of demonstrators fled into a U.N. clinic and troops fired three tear-gas canisters after them, Palestinian sources said. Clinic staff said three patients required treatment for tear-gas inhalation.

In Jibalya refugee camp in the Strip troops dispersed stone-throwers with water cannons and gravel throwers after a military outpost was attacked by worshippers leaving the local mosque, Palestinian sources said.

In all the occupied territories transport ground to a halt and shops and businesses were closed in a general strike in memory of the May 20 killings, Palestinians said.

The Unified Leadership of the Uprising, in its latest regular leaflet, designated the 20th of every month as a strike day in honour of the seven killed.

Dozens killed in militia free-for-all in S. Lebanon

NABATIYEH, Lebanon (Agencies) — Lebanon's rival Shi'ite groups fought ferocious running battles Saturday with Palestinian fighters joining in on one side and a pro-Israeli militia shelling everyone.

Security sources said more than 1,000 shells fell in nine hours of house-to-house fighting for Jarjou, killing at least 50 people and wounding 70.

They said the pro-Syrian Amal militia launched five major attacks to recapture the village in the mountainous Iqlim Al Tuffah area 40 kilometres south of Beirut, which fell to the rival Iranian-backed Hezbollah Monday.

Palestinian guerrillas, part of a 600-man force that deployed Tuesday to separate Amal and Hezbollah, provided Amal with heavy artillery and rocket support.

As the battles raged, the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia pounded Hezbollah and Amal positions with artillery fire from hills overlooking the area.

Israeli warplanes flew over the rugged mountain battlezone for the sixth consecutive day but did not use their weapons.

The security sources said the battles, close to Israel's self-declared "security zone," were the worst since the Inter-Shi'ite feud began three years ago.

"The battles are ferocious. Dead and wounded are lying on the streets of the village," said one source. Among the dead were three Palestinian guerrillas and seven Hezbollah fighters.

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The northwestern edge of the fundamentalist redoubt, police said.

But a police spokesman said: "Hezbollah is not withdrawing despite the enormous pressure. The Hezbollah are fighting tooth and nail, fighting a battle to the last bullet and dying in place."

Both sides were reported moving up reinforcements and heavy weapons for what appeared to be shaping up into a showdown between them.

Hezbollah's radio station broadcast martial music and flashed reports of the fighting. An announcer declared: "O Allah, shatter the criminals who are attacking your men in Jarjou O Allah, You will lead us to victory."

A Hezbollah leader, Sheikh Subhi Tofaili, told his fighters in a statement broadcast by the radio: "I wish I was a bullet in your rifles. I wish I was dust on your shoes. O God's men, you will win."

The Lebanese Red Cross appealed for urgent blood donations to cope with the influx of casualties. It noted that "scores of victims remain unevacuated in the confrontation zone due to the intensity of the clashes."

Another PLO-Amal force fought its way into Kfar Milki on

Petra Bank case delaying abolition of martial law; unemployment solution requires combined efforts — Badran

AMMAN (J.T.) — The total abolition of martial law in the country will be announced when a military court settles cases related to the collapse of the Petra Bank affair, and were ready to file formal charges.

Badran did not give any time frame for completion of the Petra Bank cases, and there was no indication from any source Saturday on the nature of the cases or the people expected to be tried.

According to Badran, the main reason for the delay in abolishing martial law was the fact that the Petra Bank case was referred to the martial law authorities by former Prime Minister Sharif Mudar Badran said Saturday.

Addressing the House after three sessions of heated debate on the chronic unemployment problem where the government had come under harsh attack for its "failure" to resolve the issue, the prime minister pointed out that the short period his government had spent in office was insufficient by any measure to eliminate the problem completely.

"The period of time in which this government has been in office is insufficient by any standards to solve the unemployment problem and to find permanent solutions," he said. "This important issue requires that policies and programmes which have been adopted by this government

be debated on the floor soon. However, a Royal Decree issued two weeks ago revoked the jurisdiction of martial law courts in almost all areas as a prelude to the expected total abolition.

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(Continued on page 5)

Maghreb leaders gather for summit

ALGIERS (R) — North African leaders, faced with the challenge of a united Europe across the Mediterranean, gathered Saturday to give a new push to their plans for economic integration.

Palestinians said protests began in Rafah when jeep patrols in the camp were attacked by stone-throwing youths.

A group of demonstrators fled into a U.N. clinic and troops fired three tear-gas canisters after them, Palestinian sources said. Clinic staff said three patients required treatment for tear-gas inhalation.

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"Our agenda will be to complete the structures of building the institutions of the union," Qaddafi told reporters in brief air remarks.

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out an imperialist plot against Iraq."

Israel to test Arrow missile in two weeks

U.S. to pay for second phase of project

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The commander of the Israeli air force said in an interview broadcast Saturday that Israel would likely launch its first test of the Arrow missile within two weeks.

The Arrow is being developed with U.S. strategic defence initiative (SDI) funds to combat short-range ballistic missiles.

In Washington, the U.S. Defense Department announced Friday that it would pay for the second phase of the Arrow programme.

Washington provided 80 per cent of the \$153 million in the first phase of the project, and Israel's defence ministry supplied the balance. Israel is seeking about \$200 million from the United States for the second phase.

Air force commander Avihu Bin Nun, speaking on Israel Radio, said the Arrow could operational within five years.

When asked if the first test would be launched within two weeks, he said: "This is a good assumption."

The Arrow, which has already

undergone three simulated ground tests, is designed to defend against ballistic missiles with a range of 1,000 kilometres or less.

Bin Nun said the Arrow was needed in light of efforts by Iraq and Syria to develop chemical and nuclear warheads.

"The Arrow can give a solution

mainly when the threat is going to be an unconventional threat," Bin Nun said on the radio. "If the Iraqis go farther with their plans and develop a nuclear capability, the Arrow could be an answer to stop any missile."

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens said Friday after talks with Defense Secretary Dick Cheney that he and Cheney discussed the Arrow in the context of U.S.-Israeli "security" relations during their three-hour meeting, the first high-level official discussions between the two countries since the formation of a right-wing Israeli government last month.

"We... discussed the Arrow programme, to which we attach

very great importance and as you know is a part of the SDI programme," Arens told reporters after the meeting.

The secretary (Cheney) said that the United States would support the continuation of the programme, stage two of the programme, although the details of the support would have to be discussed," Arens said.

The meeting with Cheney, announced Thursday, was set up shortly after Arens was named defence minister last month, a Defence Department spokesman said.

"The postponement was an agreement between the United States government and the Israeli government. As you know, we are in the midst of a budget summit and there's a great deal of work associated with the summit negotiations," she said.

"As a result of that, we've postponed the annual joint security assistance planning meeting and have mutually agreed with Israel to hold it in September to give us more time to prepare."

The ministers were not expected to discuss Middle East peace efforts. The United States is still awaiting a definitive Israeli answer to its proposals to start a

peace dialogue with Palestinians from the occupied territories.

The Pentagon discussions are the first at the ministerial level between Israel and the United States since formation of a right-wing Israeli government in June.

"We want to develop a credible basis on which to move the peace process forward," said Tutwiler.

Arens initiated his visit when Cheney contacted him to congratulate him on being named defence minister, a Pentagon spokesman said.

"These talks are part of a long-standing series of discussions between the United States and Israeli defence secretaries, and with other friends, about a whole range of security issues," the spokesman added.

Arens got a "full honour" welcoming ceremony at the Pentagon, complete with ruffles and flourishes from the U.S. army band and a 19-gun salute. 21-gun salutes were reserved for heads of state.

Arens inspected the assembled U.S. troops and gave a warm greeting to General Colin Powell, head of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, who toured the Middle east this month.

Qadhafi accuses U.S. of using AIDS, flies to attack world

Africa. The insect eats away at the flesh of its victim.

Qadhafi has called for the execution of members of Islamic extremist movements, JANA reported.

"Any one who belongs to the Muslim Brotherhood movement or 'Explosion, Hijra and Notification' is doomed and must be executed because it exists," Qadhafi said.

The Muslim Brotherhood is the largest social, political and religious movement in the Middle East in this century, and was involved in extremist activities until the 1970s. Hijra and Notification refer to people who take off 40 days every year to tour selected areas to remind Muslims of Islamic orthodoxy.

It was not clear what Expulsion referred to. The groups all call for legal implementation of the Sharia:

"The Americans that brought the virus and experimented it on the prisoners, released them and as a result they spread AIDS in the world," said the English-language dispatch.

"The Americans are still fighting us. They sent a fly from America and spread it in Libya," JANA quoted Qadhafi as saying.

Qadhafi made the accusation in a speech Thursday night to youth groups, the official agency JANA said.

Speaking of AIDS, the Libyan leader said: "This disease is made by the U.S. intelligence and came out of the acts of their factories," JANA reported.

"It was the U.S. that brought the virus and experimented it on the prisoners, released them and as a result they spread AIDS in the world," said the English-language dispatch.

"The killing of those who hide behind Islam is legitimate, because they are poison, devils and fire-worshippers who want to sabotage Islam," Qadhafi said in his speech to youth groups, JANA reported.

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Referring to the Afghan guerrillas, who receive U.S. aid, Qadhafi was quoted as saying: "Which Islam is that which comes from the house of Carter and which Jihad is that in Afghanistan, which is led and supported by U.S.?"

Qadhafi has warned repeatedly that fundamentalist threats to divide the Arab World, but his statements reported Friday were among his strongest yet on the subject.

Tripoli-based diplomats have said Qadhafi faces a growing challenge at home as Islamic fundamentalism makes strong inroads in northern Africa and the Middle East.

Eritrea peace talks snag over U.N. role

SANA (AP) — A new round of peace talks between Eritrean rebels and the Ethiopian government to end a 29-year-old war failed to get off the ground Saturday because of a snag over the United Nations' role, officials and diplomats reported.

Foreign Ministry officials, speaking on condition they were not named, said the Yemeni-sponsored talks were postponed until Aug. 15.

They said the Eritreans wanted the United Nations to organise a plebiscite in their north Ethiopian province, where they have been waging a secessionist war since 1961.

But diplomatic sources, also speaking on condition of anonymity, noted that such U.N. representation would be difficult because there was no U.N. resolution on which it could be based.

Eritrean province, Ethiopia's only outlet to the Red Sea, was under Italian rule from 1891 until allied armies took it in 1941. It was under British military administration for the following 11 years.

The strongest of the rebel factions, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, was involved in separate peace talks last year that were sponsored by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. Those negotiations have also deadlock ed.

Egyptian paper renews war of words with Arafat

CAIRO (Agencies) — An Egyptian newspaper Saturday renewed attacks on Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), for remarks seen as critical of Egypt's handling of the United States.

On Thursday, Egyptian dailies had quoted Arafat as telling Arab foreign ministers that Washington was very generous in its aid to Israel, while American aid to Egypt has reached the point where Egypt gets wheat week by week."

In an early edition of Saturday's Al Akhbar newspaper, editor-in-chief Ibrahim Saadeh wrote: "I don't know who among us went to tell (Arafat) that the hunger Egyptians suffer every time the weekly wheat shipment is late."

Referring to Arafat's strong personal links with Egypt, he said: "Despite this he does not let an occasion go by without seizing the chance to stab this (Egyptian) identity, to try to tear it up and injure it — one time with injustice and a thousand and one times with slander."

An Egyptian official was quoted Friday as saying Egypt had wheat stocks of three to four months and another official told the semi-official Al Ahram newspaper, "Egypt refuses the slanderous campaign against it by some Arab parties."

PLO-Egyptian relations have been uneasy for some time because of a widespread feeling in the Palestinian movement that Egypt is too vulnerable to U.S. pressure on Middle East policy.

Egypt receives \$2.3 billion a year in U.S. social and military aid, second only to the Jewish state.

The PLO, responding to the reactions, has said some media tried to distort Arafat's words. On Thursday Arafat sent Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak what the PLO called an "urgent and important" message.

Meanwhile a columnist suggested that Arafat stay away from Cairo for 10 years.

The Editorial blasts, authored by three of Egypt's top journalists, was the second on the PLO chairman this year.

Although they heralded a new chill in Egyptian-PLO relations, government sources said this would not affect Cairo's support of the organisation in future Middle East peace moves.

Identical accounts of the criticism by Arafat and Aziz were published in Cairo newspapers

Thursday in what officials acknowledged as a government leak.

The reports said Arafat lamented the absence of Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmael Abdul Meguid from the council session, which had been called at ministerial level.

Abdul Meguid was busy in Egypt with a visit by Syrian President Hafez Al Assad coinciding with the league meeting.

"Tell me, Abu Ammar: how and when will you turn up in Cairo?" wrote columnist Anis Mansour Saturday in the leading newspaper Al Ahram, using Arafat's nom de guerre. "In 10 years?"

"I swear to you... that millions of Egyptians hate the return of the Arab League headquarters to Cairo and hate even more the fact, that there are only 100 metres between the league building and the Nile River. The distance would make it difficult for them to throw the building into the Nile to avoid seeing your faces."

The league headquarters, moved from Cairo to Tunis in 1959 to protest Egypt's treaty with Israel, is to move back to the Egyptian capital in the fall. This was decided after the league ended its suspension of Egypt's membership last year.

Samir Ragab, board chairman of the newspaper Al Gomhouria, charged that the PLO was out to "abandon Egypt's pan-Arab role."

He said Palestinian leaders were piqued by the return of the headquarters to Cairo, the scheduling of the next Arab summit in the Egyptian capital in November and the rapprochement between Egypt and Syria after a 12-year rift.

Ragab said Arafat seized on the league meeting in Tunis to "stab Egypt, sow disagreement among the Arabs and thereby block the way to next November's summit in Cairo... Arafat is playing a dangerous game against Egypt and its Arab role."

A similar outburst against the PLO by editors of state-owned newspapers occurred last February after the organisation failed to condemn explicitly an attack on a bus carrying Israeli tourists near Cairo for 10 years.

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Jordan Times

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JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 771111-19

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swieki, Tel. 510740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Assumption Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 651757

Tertullians Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Assumption Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625343

Armenian-Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Apostolic Orthodox Church Tel. 772621

Episcopal Church Tel. 771751

Anglican International Church Tel. 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Normal summer weather will prevail and winds will be northerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr (Morning)

Dhuhr (Noon)

'Asr (Afternoon)

Maghrib (Evening)

Isha (Night)

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./max. temp.

Amman 19°/31° Aqaba 21°/32°

Dead Sea 21°/37° Jordan Valley 24°/38°

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 32, Aqaba 39. Humidity readings: Amman 24 per cent, Aqaba 26 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Ammar Mass Al Hajj 771020

Dr. Basim Al Qadri 644624

Dr. Abd El Rahim Ahmed 744685

Dr. Ayman Aghbari 642696

First pharmacists 770255

Forwad pharmacists 637636

Al Asmaa pharmacists 637025

Nahrouti pharmacists 623672

Al Salam pharmacists 637670

Yacoub pharmacists 644945

Shmeissani pharmacists 637660

ZARQA: Dr. Maysoon Hanan (—)

Khatibah pharmacy 963417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 691228

Crime figures rise

AMMAN (J.T.) — There has been a noticeable increase in the volume of crime committed in Jordan over the past six months as compared with the previous year, but the problem has not reached the dangerous line and can be contained, according to Public Security Department (PSD) Director Fadel Ali Fheid.

Fheid gave no figures about the total number of crimes committed in the country, but earlier statistics put the number at around 18,000.

"Since the last month of 1989 the PSD started facing additional burdens, heavier than ever before following the beginning of the democratisation process in the country," Fheid said.

He said that police in different areas reported acts of anarchy, irresponsibility and even sabotage, damage to other people's property and attack on individuals.

"The PSD, of course, has the right and the authority to intervene and stop such actions so that the process of democratisation can go ahead unhindered," Fheid added.

The PSD does not allow violations of the law and can not condone acts of 'intellectual terrorism' be imposed by certain groups on others as has happened with some who took advantage of democracy."

He attributed the increase in crimes to growing unemployment, rise in prices, the deteriorating purchasing power of the Jordanian dinar, the ongoing socio-economic change in society, difficult economic conditions prevailing in the Kingdom and the misinterpretation of the concept of democratisation among Jordanians.

Last year the PSD blamed 1,000 crimes committed in Jordan on non-Jordanian workers employed in the country who, at the

time, totalled 226,754.

Fheid blamed the non-Jordanian and the Jordanian students studying abroad for the increase in drug taking in the Kingdom.

He said that the Kingdom is

not a major consumer or producer of drugs, but its territory is being used to transport the drugs to neighbouring states.

"The PSD is intensifying its

cooperation with European countries like Germany and France and with Arab countries at large to stem the danger of drug trafficking in the Arab area," Fheid said in his statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

He said that one in every 10,000 people in the country is regarded to be a drug addict.

Concerned about this, Fheid added, the PSD is bolstering operations of the Badia and Border Police Forces.

These forces, he said, are deployed along the Jordanian-Iraqi, Jordanian-Saudi borders as well as the Aqaba and Wadi Araba regions.

In reply to a question about fire arms possessed by citizens, Fheid said that the PSD had lately eased restrictions and made it easier for people to own weapons, but these have to be licensed in accordance with regulations.

These licences, he said, are given to citizens to possess but not to carry and use their weapons as they choose.

The PSD earlier this month announced a sharp rise in the number of thefts and robberies in the Kingdom in the first five months of 1990, registering 19.5 per cent increase over the same period of 1989.

According to the PSD, a total of 262 cars were reported stolen in the first five months of 1990 as compared to 176 in the same period of 1989.

Wadi Rum prepares to receive mountaineers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Tourism has completed work on a resthouse and a camping site for tourists at Wadi Rum in the south eastern deserts and the facilities will be fully operational by the beginning of September 1990. Minister of Tourism Abdul Karim "Al" Kababiti announced Saturday.

The Ministry of Tourism, he said, expects a large number of tourists, specially mountaineers, to visit the site and practise mountaineering.

Kababiti was speaking at a special ceremony for presenting diplomas and certificates of merit to Atiq Eid Al Zalabieh, from the Wadi Rum region, who has just completed a training course in Britain and Switzerland on mountain climbing and rescue opera-

tions.

The Ministry of Tourism fi-

anced his training course in pre-

parations for making Wadi Rum an open sports area for campers and mountaineers.

According to the minister, a

special booklet will soon be

issued featuring the Wadi Rum's sports facilities.

Zalabieh was interviewed ab-

out his mission by British news-

papers and the British Broadcas-

ting Corporation (BBC).

In April last year, a group of

Italian tourists made a two-day

tour of desert areas in the Wadi

Rum and Azraq region after visi-

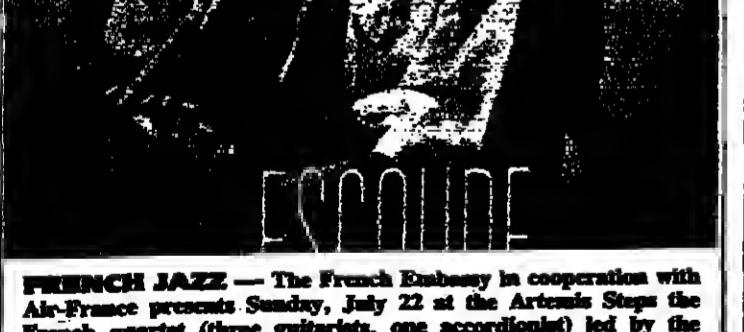
ting Ghor Safi and the Dead Sea.

The group was accompanied by

an Italian television crew which

shot a documentary film featuring

the desert castles and Wadi Rum.



PRINCH JAZZ — The French Embassy in cooperation with Air-France presents Sunday, July 22 at the Artemis Steps the French quartet (three guitarists, one accordionist) led by the famous guitarist Christian Escoude (picture).

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Open studio and workshop for artist Samia Zure displaying paintings, sculptures and hand-painted fabrics. Location: off 2nd Circle, opposite Rosenthal (9:30-1:30 and 3:30-6:30).
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Rasheda and Rabe Haddad at the Housing Bank Complex hall.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by ten Iraqi artists at the Jordan Plastic Art Association Gallery — tel. No. 699914.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings depicting Arabian and other horses by Henri Busy at the Philadelphia Hotel.

JERASH FESTIVAL

- ★ Concerts by the Jordan Armed Forces Band (6:00 - 7:00 p.m.), a local folk troupe (7:00 - 8:00) and a Yemeni folk troupe (8:30 - 9:30 p.m.) at the Forum.
- ★ Poets and poetry at Artemis Steps (7:00 - 9:00 p.m.).
- ★ Concert by a French quartet at Artemis Steps — 9:30 p.m.
- ★ Concerts by Al Faleha singing troupe at the South Theatre — 9:30 - 11:00 p.m.



Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath, who returned home Saturday from visits to Britain and Spain, are received upon arrival by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal (Petra photo)

Crown Prince returns

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan returned home Saturday after a working visit to the United Kingdom during which he met with British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd.

Prince Hassan and Hurd held talks on the situation in the Middle East region, developments in the European arena and bilateral relations between Jordan and Britain.

Prince Hassan has also visited Durham University where he received an honorary doctorate degree in civil law in appreciation for his role at the Jordanian and international levels. The degree is given to statesmen who contributed to the development

of their countries.

During his visit the Crown Prince held meetings with journalistic institutions and explained the different aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

Prince Hassan also visited Spain at the invitation of King Juan Carlos. Prince Hassan met the Spanish Prime Minister Philippe Gonzalez and held talks with him on the Middle East situation and the cultural relations between Jordan and Spain.

Prince Hassan also took part in an Iberian-Latin American-Arab conference held in Seville to enhance cultural dialogue between the Arab and Latin American states and to bolster cooperation between them in all possible fields. Prince Hassan delivered the opening address at the conference.

The Crown Prince also laid the foundation stone for the Jordanian wing at Seville International Fair which will open in 1992.

Prince Hassan was received upon arrival in Amman by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ibn Al Hussein, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi, Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Suleiman Arar, the King's political advisor Adnan Abu Odeh, chief chamberlain and several senior officials.

King receives Turkish, Saudi cables

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday received two cables from Turkish President Turgut Ozal, sent in reply to a cable of condolences over the death of the Turkish pilgrims in Al Mu'alem tunnel accident at the beginning of July and from King Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia in reply to a cable by the King after ending his visit to Saudi Arabia last week. King Fahd expressed his joy over King Hussein's visit and wished the King good health and happiness and the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity.

King congratulates Poland

King Hussein Saturday sent

a cable to Polish President Wojciech Jaruzelski in which he congratulated him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian government and people on Poland's national day anniversary. King Hussein wished Jaruzelski good health and happiness and the Polish people further progress and prosperity.

Pakistani judge calls for Islamic support for Jordan

By Ica Wahbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan deserves the support of the entire Islamic World in its efforts to liberate the holy places from Israeli occupation and it is an Islamic duty to extend such assistance to the Kingdom, according to the Chief Islamic Justice of Pakistan.

Jordan is doing "everything it can" to free the Israeli-occupied territories and "it is the duty of every Muslim to extend all forms of support" for the Kingdom in its endeavours, said Sheikh Gul Mohammad Khan.

Sheikh Khan, who presides over the Federal Sharia Court of Pakistan, said he found that Pakistan could benefit from Jordan's experience in applying Sharia law, "an experience that goes back to the time of the Turkish Ottoman empire."

Sheikh Khan pointed out that his country, which was created in 1947, had very little experience in applications of Islamic laws until 1976 when then Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto enacted a series of legislations. In comparison, Sheikh Khan said, Islamic laws were in practice in the region even after World War I, when the Ottoman Empire disintegrated and the Emirate of Transjordan was created in 1920.

He noted that His Majesty King Hussein, realising the need to absorb issues such as insurance, inheritance, etc., into the legislation of the country, modified the "majlis," which dates back to the Ottomans, and enacted new legislation in 1976.

In Pakistan, under the influence of the British and under several military rulers, Sharia could not be applied till 1976 when Bhutto changed direction totally to Islam. Qadianis (followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, self-proclaimed prophet, who do not believe in the finality of the prophet Mohammad) were declared non-Muslims. Gambling was banned as being against Islam and so was the use of liquor and intoxicants. "By 1979 Islam was enforced in its totality" and under Mohammad Zia Ul Haq, who toppled Bhutto in a coup but followed in the

prime minister's moves in enforcing Islamic laws, the trend was further strengthened. The moves culminated in the creation of the Federal Sharia Court chaired by Sheikh Khan, who was previously a judge at the Lahore High Court.

Replying questions about his background, Sheikh Khan volunteered to explain that he was not involved in the trial of Bhutto, who was sentenced to death on murder charges and was hanged in 1979. "I was a judge at the Lahore court, but not in the same court which ordered the death sentence," he said.

Asked what specific areas of cooperation between Jordan and Pakistan in Islamic affairs could benefit from Jordan's experience in applying Sharia law, "an encompassing covering all realms as the Holy Book covers all aspects of life," he said.

During his stay here, Sheikh Khan held talks with King Hussein, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Justice Minister Mousa Mbeideen, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ali Al Faqir, Chief Islamic Justice Mohammad Mheilan, other senior officials as well as judges and members of Parliament.

In reply to another question, Sheikh Khan reiterated Pakistan's known positions in support of the Palestinian cause, but framed the stance in an Islamic perspective. "The Kaba, the Mosque of the Holy Prophet and Al Quds are very near to a Muslim's heart," he said. "Al Quds is the first Kaba of Islam. No Muslim will live with the fact that this holy place is in the control of any party other than Muslims themselves. No sacrifice will be too much for taking the control back."

"It is the duty of every Muslim to extend support for Jordan, in whatever form, in its efforts to liberate the holy places but all support should come within the laws of this country," he added.

The Indo-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir was characterized by Sheikh Khan as one of honouring of commitments. He said that the government of India had committed before the United Nations that Kashmir was a "disputed territory" and that Kashmiris alone were

entitled to decide their fate. "This fact is not in dispute," he said. "It is an admitted, internationally accepted position," and any move to settle the problem should start from this point.

"How do having a woman prime minister and Islamic law fit?"

"In Pakistan we have a democratic set up," replied the judge, a graduate from Britain. "Our constitution does not discriminate between men and women. If the people want a woman prime minister, in a democratic set up the law prevails. Besides, our prime minister is a very intelligent, active person who has gained immense popularity."

Sheikh Khan, who was careful in answering every question in clearly set-out legal terms and perspectives, skirted a direct question on an ongoing case involving a Jordanian accused of being a member of the Qadiani sect. He noted that Pakistan had declared its Qadianis as "non-Muslims" and therefore not subject to the Islamic law that is applicable to an "apostate" — someone who slanders or defames teachings of the Holy Koran and Prophet Mohammad. "The law and punishment will apply when a Muslim becomes a Qadiani," he said. "We are not concerned if a non-Muslim becomes a Qadiani" since neither the origin nor the conversion involve Islam as a religion. It is estimated that Pakistan has over four million Qadianis.

Sheikh Khan is accompanied on his visit by his family. He leaves Jordan on July 23 for Turkey and England.

House approves abolition of NMI

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Saturday approved a motion moved by the government to abolish the 1987 law establishing the National Medical Institution (NMI).

The House was acting upon recommendations from both its legal and health committees. The NMI was established in 1987 and intended to group all health services provided by the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Health and the universities under one central authority.

The NMI had earlier in the year come under fierce attack

from deputies and the public for allegations of mismanagement.

Informed sources say that some of the institutions merged and many doctors, especially Armed Forces doctors, were against the NMI.

Deputies and both the legal and the health committees proposed that the government draft a new legislation to replace the NMI law. The legal committee, reporting to the House, said it has got a pledge from the government to this effect.

"It does not matter cancelling or retaining the NMI," the legal

committee said in its verdict, "most important is keeping all medical services under one central authority."

The committee proposed a higher health council to group all health services. Deputies also proposed that medical personnel in the different institutions receive equal salaries and benefits.

At the moment the Armed Forces doctors and medical personnel get higher salaries and enjoy better fringe benefits.

Leftist deputy Bassam Haddadin protested that "establishing the NMI was a hasty decision and cancelling it is hasty too."

Haddadin proposed that the government draft a new law for the institution that would ensure better health services.



Minister of Youth Ibrahim Ghabeibeh Saturday opens the Ajloun youth camp for Jordanian expatriates (Petra photo)

Youth camp opened in Ajloun

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Youth Ibrahim Ghabeibeh Saturday deputised for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in opening a week-long youth camp in which expatriate young Jordanians are taking part.

The camp, organised in Ajloun, has 100 youths who work

or study abroad.

The Ministry of Youth seeks to maintain strong ties with Jordanians abroad, at all levels, through constant correspondence and by supplying the news about their country and various youth activities taking part in the Kingdom," said the minister in an

address at the opening ceremony. Participants will listen to a series of lectures of political, cultural and economic nature and will go on tours to different cities and archaeological sites in Jordan. They will also meet prominent people from the private and public sectors.

AFFI meeting tackles the problem of food sufficiency

AMMAN (Petra) — The question of food sufficiency has now become an important strategy of international dimensions and its importance is increased every day due to the recurring deficit of food production, Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) Secretary-General Hassan Ibrahim said Saturday.

"The Arab Federation for Food Industries (AFFI) is trying through various efforts and at all levels to boost agricultural production and increase food

sufficiency with the purpose of ensuring food security which, in turn, can ensure sovereignty and independence for Arab states," Ibrahim said in an address at the opening session of

Jordan Times

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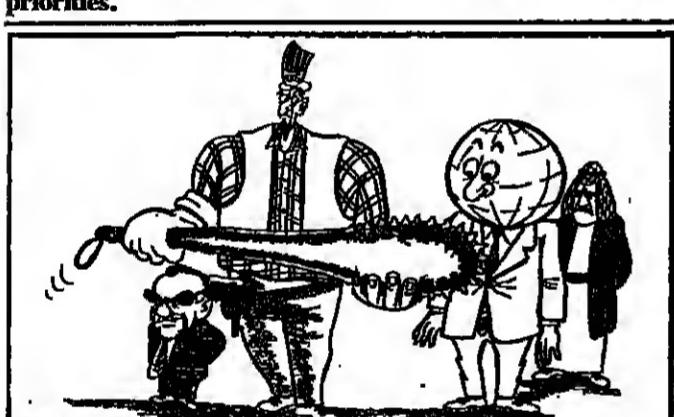
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Paper tiger will fall

If there is ever a need for an Arab oil producing states' summit, it is now. With differences between OPEC's Arab states simmering for sometime and the gap between formal agreement and actual implementation widening more than ever between OPEC countries in general, it is high time that Arab OPEC countries put their heads and hearts, and in due course their act, together. The world at large is most certainly exploiting the inability or unwillingness of the OPEC countries to enforce what they solemnly undertake to honour and implement. This is particularly so in the Western industrial countries which have been taking them for an easy ride for much too long. Part of the problem lies in the fact that some OPEC countries subscribe reluctantly to the majority view without real commitment to abide by such a position. It would be wiser, therefore, to devise another formula for decision taking within OPEC with a view to assuring unanimity instead of manipulating consensuses on matters that are most vital to the member states especially quota guidelines. Till now OPEC as an organisation has been continually hampered by the problem of discrepancy between word and deed and until this problem is effectively rectified, there is neither a future for the organisation nor for its member states.

From an Arab point of view, it would be prudent to keep in perspective at all times that oil energy is an exhaustible source of wealth. The time when Arab oil sources dry up, affected Arab states would not only lose an economic edge but also a political chip. In all future global bargaining on all levels, Arab oil wells will be highly prized and coveted bargaining chips that should not be squandered. In this vein the Arab perspective and priorities need not always correspond with those of other non-Arab OPEC members. And if OPEC as presently constituted is doomed to become a paper tiger, the Arab oil producing states need to form their own club to preserve and protect their special interests and priorities.



Israeli newspapers did not conceal the fact that Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens' current visit to the United States is connected with the present Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis over oil production and prices, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. These papers also disclosed indirectly that Washington is disturbed over Iraq's growing military power and is determined to prevent any Arab country from acquiring sufficient military might to achieve parity with Israel, the paper added. The paper expressed the view that Washington is trying to internationalise the Kuwaiti-Iraqi issue so that it can find a convenient role for Israel to interfere by dealing a blow to Iraq, supported by the United States, similar to the 1956 aggression of Egypt. The Arab nation against a major Israeli-U.S. strike against the Iraqi installations as the Arabs in general and Iraq and Kuwait in particular are involved in solving the oil dispute. The paper said that the United States was trying to seize the opportunity of East-West detente and the on-going international developments in order to deal a blow to the Arab nation, create new realities in the Middle East region and ensure the permanent occupation of Arab land in Palestine. The paper called on Arab countries to consider the U.S.-Israeli threats seriously and take proper action for self-defence.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Saturday expresses dissatisfaction with the notion of linking the proposed National Charter with the democratisation process in the Kingdom. Fakher Kawar says that the charter has not been formulated yet, and the government is delaying any action in allowing political parties to establish their foothold in the democratisation process. The government is not allowing new political newspapers to appear and is dragging its feet over issuing a new press and publication law until and when the charter has been completed, the writer notes. This charter could take three months or three years to complete; and it seems that the government is delaying any action until this charter has been approved, a process that could take indefinite time, Kawar adds. Democracy, he notes, is not a legislative authority but it is a process that comes after free elections regardless of the presence of any National Charter. Democracy, he adds, requires us to open the door for the masses to form political parties, issue newspapers and organise the public's various sectors. The writer expresses the view that the National Charter is not needed at present since the Jordanian constitution can provide all the necessary elements for the democratisation process.

All Dostour daily expressed hope that the Arab League will find a proper formula to defuse the Iraqi-Kuwaiti dispute and safeguard the Arab nation's higher interests. The paper said that the United States was quick to seize the opportunity and disrupt Arab solidarity, simply because it aims to thwart any attempt by the Arab nation to unify its stand and pool its resources in confrontation with the common Israeli enemy. The United States is also keen on retaining its fleets and armed forces in the Gulf to maintain its supremacy there depending on regional conflicts, the paper added. What we need now, said the paper, is to prevent any foreign intervention in the inter-Arab row; and this can be done by giving the Arab League a free hand to settle the Iraqi-Kuwaiti issue once and for all.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Huge surplus in 1989 balance of payments

The Central Bank of Jordan issued a preliminary balance of payments for the year 1989. The statement reflected a surplus of JD 360 million, a surprising result which should have raised the curiosity of those who compiled the figures to look for a possible mistake, that could have caused the outcome which was too good to be believed.

Taking the figures of the balance of payments at their face value, we find that the Jordanian economy has turned around overnight to a surplus economy. The current account, which posted a deficit of JD 118 million in 1987, and JD 105 million in 1988, somehow did not only reduce the deficit gradually as was planned over five years; it also showed a surplus in the magnitude of JD 223 million in 1989, a net improvement of JD 328 million in one year.

It is understandable and expected that the devaluation of the Jordanian dinar should help the balance of trade. It is equally conceivable that the economic adjustment programme adopted since mid

April 1989, should improve the balance of payments, being the mirror that reflects the interaction between Jordan and the World. However, it never occurred to any observer or policy maker that Jordan could achieve this impressive result in a matter of months. The credit for the bottom line of the balance of payments may be a big mistake in the methodology or a huge deficiency in the data given to, or collected or estimated by the Central Bank.

The deficit in the balance of commodities narrowed from JD 638 million in 1988 to JD 577 million in 1989, a new improvement of JD 61 million. This was much less than expected in view of the reduction of imports and growth of exports, but we should question the increase in the surplus of the balance of services by JD 128 million, "especially when the Minister of Finance has already projected some worsening in the balance of services but to a lesser degree than the improvement in the balance of commodities and he expected the final outcome to

remain positive. The figures in the balance of payments suggest that incoming remittances from Jordanian expatriates abroad rose by 7 per cent in terms of JD's, while at the same time outgoing remittances of guest workers in Jordan dropped by 9 per cent. These figures contradict our impressions, but that is not, by any means, an evidence that the figures are wrong, only that they should be examined critically.

The capital account showed a big surplus as well. The government repaid JD 223 million to foreign lenders during 1989, while borrowing JD 348 million, thus the net borrowing for the year would be in the order of JD 125 million. This result, if accurate, was made possible thanks to rescheduling. Perhaps the major part of the increase in the external public debt was caused by the capitalisation of interest, rather than a fresh transfer of funds.

Apparently the reason behind these questionable figures in the balance of payments is the substantial change in the exchange rate. Banks' foreign assets were translated into JDs

at the current exchange rate which naturally showed a nominal increase, while the foreign liabilities of the government were not adjusted up, in terms of JD's, to reflect the new exchange rate; otherwise government liabilities to foreign lenders would have made a big jump.

On the other hand it is suspected that the huge surplus of JD 360 million in the banking sector could have been partially caused by double counting. On one hand, commercial banks' exchange deposits in foreign currencies, and on the other 35 per cent of the foreign currency deposits in the commercial banks are being deposited with the Central Bank. Is it possible that the same dollars were counted twice, while the liabilities in foreign exchange of the Central Bank were not brought into the picture because they belong to residents?

In general, the preliminary figures of the balance of payments were not sufficiently convincing. They need full explanation on the basis and methods of compilation, especially when it comes to the changes in the outstanding

value of assets and liabilities of both the government and the banking sector.

Until then, the official balance of payments for 1989 could not be safely used as an economic policy and decision making tool in 1990, otherwise capitalised interest of around \$700 million was not accounted for in the balance of payments.

because it was compiled on cash basis and real transactions, while the capitalisation of interest was performed on paper only, therefore it was not reflected in the current account under investment returns. Had the Central Bank dealt with capitalisation of interest as a fresh loan from lenders to finance the payment of due interest, the surplus in the current account would have been converted to a deficit of JD 177 million.

The Jordanian balance of payments in dollars, prepared by the experts of the IMF did just that. They ended up with a bottom line of \$60 million in deficit in 1989. After all, why the re-adjusting and adjustment programme if Jordan has really become a surplus country?

Kenya gripped by winds of change

By Didrikke Schanche
The Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — The winds of democracy blowing from Eastern Europe have reached Kenya, setting off bloody street battles in what has been considered the most stable nation of black Africa.

Several political explosions have rocked Africa south of the Sahara this year. Mass demands for reform have shaken other one-party governments in Ivory Coast, Gabon, Zambia, Cameroon, Zaire and Benin.

Analysts say the protests reflect awareness that one-party rule was swept aside in Eastern Europe last year and the weariness of Africans with leadership that often is authoritarian and corrupt.

In Kenya, at least 28 people were killed in riots that began at a banned rally for multiparty politics July 7. The demonstrators stoned a plainclothes policeman and police responded with tear gas and gunfire, starting four days of street battles that spread to other parts of the country.

Multiparty democracy "is an international catchword which has been adopted by all those who have a grievance against the government," said a Western diplomat based in Nairobi.

"They may not know what it means, but they know that they are unhappy and that what they've got hasn't worked," said the diplomat, who spoke on condition he not be identified further.

Rising food prices, skyrocketing debt, swelling populations and steady economic decline have added fuel to the political fires.

In Zambia, a failed coup on July 1 followed five days of the worst urban violence in the nation's history. At least 23 people were killed in student riots over food price increases.

The students also demanded Western-style democracy and the ouster of President Kenneth Kaunda, who leads the United National Independence Party, since 1972 the only legal political movement in the Southern African country.

Protests of austerity measures and corruption in Ivory Coast in March grew into violent anti-government demonstrations demanding an end to the 30-year reign of President Felix Houphouet-Boigny.

He was forced to legalise political organisations other than his own Democratic Party.

President Omar Bongo of Gabon installed a multiparty system in May after a coup attempt late last year and student protests in January and February. France sent troops to protect oil workers when more riots broke out in May.

Benin dropped a Marxist-Leninist style of government late last year and adopted political pluralism.

Paul Biya, Cameroon's president, came to power in 1983 promising more democracy, but his government has cracked down on advocates of pluralism since February.

Six people were killed at a pro-democracy rally and authorities arrested 10 prominent

(Continued from page 1)

letter sent by prosecutor-general Mohammad Smadi to Minister of Justice Yousef Mbeidek, a former ministry of supply under-secretary has been indicted of "exploiting public office" in a case involving a shipment of rice. The former official is under trial, according to legal sources.

The prosecutor-general, in the same letter, also reported that he could not find any case after investigations into the Jicha amusement park. "The investigating team, headed by Mohammad Ajarmel, found that there is no evidence that a crime was committed by any person and therefore the case is closed," the letter said.

It was not immediately known whether deputies would press for fresh investigations into the case. But a deputy, who is a member of the House's Legal Committee, said that the chamber had no intention of looking into cases which the prosecutor-general has cleared.

However, heated debates characterised Saturday's House session. Deputy Leith Shabani called for amendments to the constitution to remove the immunity granted to ministers against trial by regular courts.

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Six people were killed at a pro-democracy rally and authorities arrested 10 prominent

4 ex-ministers cited in corruption findings

(Continued from page 1)

according to the constitution."

Abdullah Zreiqat, a deputy from Karak, charged that "corruption is still at its peak in the country" and called on the government to "choose competent officials" to run its affairs.

Jamal Kharsa, a central bedouin deputy, said that "corruption in Jordan is on the lips of everyone, even those outside the country." He suggested that Parliament accelerate investigations with a view to putting an end to the issue once and for all.

Bassam Haddadin, a leftist deputy from Zarqa, accused the government of being "negatively neutral" in its approach towards investigating corruption. "Since the government has all the documents and files, it should conduct the investigations rather than Parliament," he said.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran

countered by arguing that the term "negatively neutral" was of no meaning since the House was the party to initiate investigations into corruption and the government had cooperated by providing all documents in its possession. He emphasised that the investigation was "not political."

Hussein Mjalli, a Jewish deputy and a veteran lawyer who heads the legal committee of the House, intervened to say that "we are not here to distinguish between authorities."

The cases were referred to the prosecutor-general and the issue moved on to complete the investigation.

With intervention from Speaker Salehman Arar, the House moved on to discussing the formation of the committee entrusted with studying the cases.

Arabs step up Gulf mediation

(Continued from page 1)

Kuwait, in a memorandum to the Arab League, counter-charged Iraq of encroaching on its territory and stealing its oil.

The Iraqi paper Al Qadissiya said: "It's surprising that Kuwait claims that Iraq has violated Kuwaiti territory while Kuwait knows very well that Iraq was busy with the war and its armed forces were posted on the battlefront."

It said no Iraqi soldiers were deployed on the border with Kuwait during the conflict and one can only come to the conclusion that the alleged Iraqi violations are only in Kuwait's imagination.

"We would like to emphasize that the Rumailah oilfield is 100 per cent Iraqi and Kuwait's utilisation of these

fields are violations and encroachments on Iraq's rights... on which we keep silent," it said.

"Arab differences... must be resolved in brotherly spirit of wisdom and mutual respect," it said.

The UAE's newspaper, which for two days had been ordered by the government to keep coverage of the crisis to a bare minimum, Saturday defended the government against the Iraqi allegations.

Despite the tension, the Kuwaiti press maintained a low-key approach to the row.

A Qatari emphasised what it said were the historic ties between Kuwait and Iraq and called for negotiations.

Al Siyasa daily mixed conciliatory and assertive language, saying Kuwait would never yield to threats and blackmail.

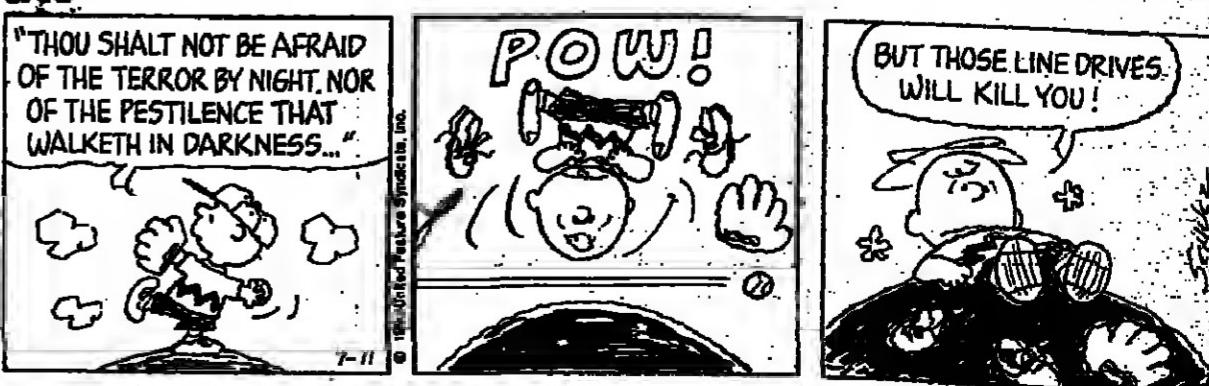
Mutt'n Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



Cures could be in the making for Jordan's health spa

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Hopes have been rekindled that new formulas could be worked out to cure the financial ailments of Jordan's first health spa complex with changes at the helm of the company heralded by net losses compounded by running management conflicts over the facility's operations.

The decision last week of the Ministry of Industry and Trade to dissolve the board of direc-

tors of the Jordan Tourism and Spa Complex Company (JTSCC) and appoint an ad hoc committee in its place for the next one year was widely welcomed by most business circles as well as officials who are optimistic that fundamental changes could be brought about to improve the situation of the Ma'in Health Spa.

"The committee is made up mostly of technocrats with business orientation," commented an economic analyst. "This should help improve the

operations of the spa very much."

One of the main problems of the JD 14 million facility, the sole project of the JTSCC, is low occupancy. While feasibility studies indicated 60 to 70 per cent occupancy rates, the actual situation, after one and half years of full operation, is around 40 per cent, according to Ishaq Al Ayed, general manager of the company. "It is too low for any hotel," Ayed told the Jordan Times.

According to Ayed, who assumed the job about one month ago, "there is a lot of room for improvement in facilities, services and marketing of the spa."

The final accounts of the spa are under auditing by Shaer and Company and no accurate figures on the profit or loss could be obtained. But Ramzi Nazzal of Middle East Tourism Service and Management Company (METMA), the firm which operates the spa under a management contract, said the "gross operational profits" during 1989 amounted to JD 200,000. This figure could not be independently verified.

"We hope to improve the situation as we go along and that the hotel will be self-sufficient soon," Nazzal told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview. Under the management contract, valid for seven years, METMA collects nine per cent of the gross operational profits and two per cent of the gross revenue.

Nazzal said he did not expect any adverse impact on the

management contract by the change in the board of directors of the owner company.

Basing their calculations on a gross profit figure of JD 200,000, informed hotel industry circles said the net loss of the owners of the project could be in the region of JD 60,000 to JD 70,000 for the year 1989, after providing for loan servicing, depreciation and other related accounts.

The spa employs 174 people, including regular hotel staff and experts in various health specializations, and five people, including the general manager, are employed at the owner company.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade was exercising a right as provided for in the Companies Act when it dissolved the board of directors of the JTSCC. Government agencies such as the Social Security Corporation, the Postal Savings Fund and the Pension Fund, whose funds are invested through the Jordan Investment Corporation, own 72.9 per cent of the JD 5 million equity of the company, the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) and the Housing Bank own eight per cent and the rest is floated in the Amman Financial Market.

The JD 1 par value shares of the company was last quoted at the stock exchange at 800 fils, but an economist expected it to rise as the "dust settles down and things are clarified at the Ma'in spa."

According to Ayed and several investment consultants, the problem with the complex can be directly attributed to the relatively new concept of a health spa in an Arab country.

"It is a trial and error process," said a consultant. "As years pass by, one learns from past mistakes and corrects them. But the question here is different simply because the amount involved is too high."

Another consultant was a little sceptical. "There are many in the Arab World who would gladly travel to health spas in Europe spending a lot of money, but will raise eyebrows at the mention of a 'health spa' in an Arab country."

It was indeed the regular flow of people to the hot springs at Ma'in, near Madaba, that gave birth to the idea of developing the area into a health spa. But, said an analyst, "what appeared to have been overlooked in the bargain is that a majority of those people who used to frequent the springs is not from that class which can afford even two-star hotels."

The ministry's decision to dissolve the 11-member board of directors, which was appointed on Jan. 22, 1990,

After feasibility established that there was good potential for health tourism at the Ma'in springs, the owner company awarded the building contract to Heitor, a local firm, at a cost of JD 8,604 million, with an additional provision of JD 1,035 for furnishings. Construction began in 1982, but the process was delayed for several years and by the time of completion in late 1987, a total of around JD 14 million had gone into it.

A claim by the contractor and a counter-claim by the owners are now before the mayor of Greater Amman Municipality whose ruling will be accepted by both parties by agreement. The exact amounts involved are not known, but an informed official said: "It is pretty high."

Ayed is confident that the facility could yield very good results if a comprehensive strategy is drawn up and applied "with complete understanding and harmony between the management company and the owners."

"There is a lot of potential in the Gulf region but it needs a better approach, better facilities, better services and better marketing," Ayed said. "But above everything, there should be clear understanding between the two parties."

Ayed, who has an impressive background in travel and tourism in Europe with airlines, including Royal Jordanian, declined to get into any detailed review. But informed sources confirmed that working relations between the former board of directors and the management company were not exactly harmonious.

This was also affirmed by Nazzal of METMA. "Now we hope that we do not have to get the approval of the board everytime we plan to appoint someone," he told the Jordan Times. The management contract stipulates that the owners should approve all appointments to executive positions at the spa, which is in essence a hotel complex but offering natural cure for several ailments.

The ministry's decision to dissolve the 11-member board of directors, which was appointed on Jan. 22, 1990, came after its chairman and some of its members requested it, according to an official who requested anonymity. "They tried their best to strike a balance, but there were recurring problems with the management company. At a certain point in time, they decided



they could no longer do it, and approached the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Trade and Industry with a request that they be relieved of the responsibility," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Mohammad Saeed Abu Nowar, now the ex-chairman, declined to make any comment on the issue and referred all questions to the new six-member ad hoc committee, which is entrusted with running the company and studying its situation before presenting recommended proposals at the end of one year. The committee is headed by former Minister of Trade and Industry Ziad Annab and includes representatives of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the IDB and the Ministry of Tourism. Only one member of the previous board has found his way to the committee.

Ayed believes that a road linking the spa to the Dead Sea, some five kilometres down, will boost the facilities' business. "There is already a resthouse down there," he pointed out. "We could market the spa and the resthouse as a package."

The Ministry of Public Works has promised that it will construct such an access road if it finds budget allocations after finishing its ongoing project of building a new road between Naour and the Dead Sea.

"A diet health farm is also a good idea," said Ayed adding that he was going to propose his ideas to the ad hoc committee.

plex was formally declared open on Jan. 1, 1989.

The project was one of dozens of cases of possible corruption raised in the Lower House of Parliament during a secret session in March this year, according to informed sources. But "no case file has yet been sent for investigation," said a legal source. According to parliamentary sources, one of the questions raised was how such an high-cost venture was built in an area prone to landslides. According to geophysical experts, chances of a recurrence of another landslide in the area are slim.



Badran: Petra Bank case delaying martial law abolition

(Continued from page 1)

The rounded balance for 1990 is 44,000 applications.

"But their success requires your support and cooperation and backing from the private and public sectors," he told the House.

Badran also hit back at critics, whom he did not name, for "slander" against the government. He said the government welcomed constructive criticism but would not accept slander or criticism for its sake.

Following are major excerpts from the prime minister's address:

The government has listened and fully grasped the speeches of the honourable gentlemen about the unemployment problem in Jordan. The government shares with them the view over most of the points that were raised in their speeches and remarks and recommendations, specially those in harmony with the government's strategy as presented by the minister of labour.

What the government has achieved in this short period is represented in the stable currency exchange rate, the launching of an economic restructuring programme, reduction of the deficit in the fiscal budget and the restoration of confidence in the national economy.

This is sound policy which can lead to a solution for the unemployment problem.

Two: Organizing the labour market. The government is keen on subcontracting non-Jordanians with local workers. The reorganization of the labour market is one of the main policies required to deal with the question of unemployment and this policy has started to yield fruit.

The government inherited this heavy responsibility under very difficult circumstances known to everybody and succeeded in a record period of time to place things in their right perspectives.

The government has succeeded in employing 6,750 or 48 per cent of the total number of job seekers in the past six months. This should be regarded as an achievement and a genuine indicator of its diligence and dedication.

Social development institutions play an effective role in carrying out small-size projects. Over the past six months these institutions initiated 137 vocational training projects for needy families in agriculture and stock farming. They offered financial assistance to 1,683 families, set up 67 rehabilitation schemes, set up rehabilitation centres for girls in Irbid and in Tafith, established 30 new charitable

societies and set up a chain of social development centres in the desert areas.

Fourth: Rehabilitation and vocational training.

The Vocational Training Corporation is currently training 10,000 students from bedouin and rural regions, and so far 3,000 have graduated to start work.

Seventh: Persons dismissed for political reasons.

The government is committed to reabsorb these people. The Civil Service Commission has already started appointing dismissed persons giving them priority over others.

In a move to deal with the problem of unemployment, the government will now amend the Civil Service Law to allow employees to take two-to-five years vacation without salary to find employment abroad so that other people can take their place.

This government does not seek popularity by creating 20,000 jobs all of a sudden because it is committed to its national policies and can be measured by its popularity and support at the expense of the national interest.

Fourth: The development and employment fund.

This fund is being created to provide funds for technical guidance to enable groups and individuals to engage in production schemes and income-generating projects. The government has gone a long way to create such a fund in cooperation with the World Bank.

This fund will operate as an independent institution to deal with the question of employment and poverty by providing loans for schemes.

It will cooperate with the voluntary societies, which will in turn offer grants to the needy to start enterprises. So far a JD 7 million capital has been raised for the fund, collected from foreign aid to Jordan, but the government is conducting negotiations with the World Bank to ensure further funds.

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and unity cannot be achieved by a government decision, nor can the government solve the problems of unemployment and the soaring prices by a unilateral decision on the part of Jordan.

We have to tread with care in this matter and in the exchange of workers with other Arab countries.

We organize the labour market here encouraging Jordanians to work abroad and opening Jordan for limited numbers of non-Arabs to work here in the light of the national needs.

The government, after hearing the deputy's speech, will now embark on studying various views and proposals and try to implement and apply as many of them as possible in a manner which serves public interest.

This government is committed to its policy statement. It realizes the course it is following and is laying down policies and defining its procedures in all fields with awareness and accuracy under very difficult conditions.

The government appreciates those who helped it in its sound actions by pointing out real failures but those who merely seek to slander and defame the government can only say that I do not take it upon myself to step down to a lower level and get involved in counter moves.

The government is committed to its responsibilities and is committed to carry out its duties before the King and the people and realizes the voices of those who try to instigate the masses to turn against their homeland and its stability.

Jordan is a steadfast country, which can endure starvation and harm and it can by no means be despised nor will it ever abandon its determination and its resolve to follow its sound course and be diverted from its course by poisoned words designed to sow dissension.

This government will continue to spread an atmosphere of confidence in the national economy and will pursue a stable investment policy. It will not open side battles that can only shake confidence and weaken stability and only deals with facts and realities and work with diligence and perseverance to implement the directives of the royal letter of designation and in true commitment to its policy statement presented to parliament.

This government does not condone sin, nor can it accept any defamation of reputation and any stabbing in the back.

France to overhaul embassy security after Beirut scandal

PARIS (R) — France embarked on a complete overhaul of security at its embassies after the discovery of an arms smuggling ring at its mission in Beirut.

Members of the elite force of policemen protecting the embassy and French diplomats in Lebanon are suspected of buying cut-price weapons from militia contacts and supplying them to France's criminal underworld.

The current head of the French "rambos" was questioned by a magistrate Friday after he was flown home from Beirut. Two of his former subordinates were charged with arms trafficking earlier this week.

Interior Minister Pierre Joxe said in a radio interview he would be "pitiless" with those found guilty and described the scandal as a heavy blow to the image of the French police.

Joxe, who is responsible for the country's 120,000-strong police force, has opened an inquiry headed by one of his top officials, Jean Marc Erbes.

"The security system at diplomatic missions will have to be reviewed from top to bottom. The Beirut affair has uncovered some serious lapses," Erbes told the daily Le Figaro in an interview.

The Foreign Ministry, deeply embarrassed by the lucrative five-year trade in everything from rocket launchers to assault rifles, has launched its own inquiry.

The ministry's spokesman said Friday that Rene Ala, the French ambassador in Beirut, would conduct the probe with "all the necessary speed and vigour."

Contrary to earlier statements by investigators, none of the paramilitary gendarmes who have served in Beirut has been detained for questioning.

All the suspects are policemen, mainly drawn from the fearsome CRS anti-riot units.

Although French government officials have refused to comment in detail on the affair, retreating for once behind much-abused

a news conference, Labourdette had still not been formally charged Friday by the magistrate leading the investigation.

Labourdette, who has served a record five years in the world's most dangerous city, was shown in television footage and archive photographs.

KAROLINE

Al Hayat

the healthy refreshing drink, from Karoline

Barrowman gets Goodwill Games started with swimming record

SEATTLE, Washington (AP) — Mike Barrowman helped to launch the Goodwill Games in style by smashing his own world record in the 200 metres breaststroke on the opening day of the 17-day sporting extravaganza.

The furious pace pulled two other swimmers to times under Barrowman's previous record and the American raised his arms and howled in delight when he saw his time on the clock.

The swimmers were the first to collect medals in a 21-sport spectacle that involves some 2,500 athletes from nearly 50 countries.

Soviet gymnasts scooped up the gold offered in the men's team competition ahead of the United States and China as the games built up momentum heading into a busy opening weekend.

But Barrowman's blazing breaststroke victory was the opening day's highlight. The American touched in two minutes 11.53 second to slash 1.36 seconds off his old mark of 2:12.89.

Soviet Olympic bronze medalist Sergio Lopez of Spain and American Kirk Stackle finished in a dead heat at 2:12.24 and were each given a silver medal.

"I expected it, I was dreaming

of 2:11.5," Barrowman said, still beaming after his triumph.

Olympic champions Matt Biondi and Janet Evans were among other American winners while backstrokers Martin Zubero of Spain and Hungarian Krisztina Egerszegi prevented a U.S. sweep.

The Soviet victory in the gymnastics was expected but the surprise of the competition was the American silver medal.

Chris Waller, who needed heart surgery six years ago to correct a constricted aorta, produced a dazzling pommel horse routine to help the Americans clinch second place.

"They (the doctors) said if I didn't have it I would start having problems when I was 25 and die by the time I was 30," said Waller, 21.

Meanwhile the Soviet Union won the gold medal in the men's team gymnastic event at the Goodwill Games, but a brash young American team turned in a surprising performance to take the silver.

The heavily favoured Soviets scored 176.50 points out of a possible 180 to win the title with ease. The U.S. team followed with 172.55, while the youthful Chinese took the bronze with

172.35. East Germany was fourth with 171.50.

It was the strongest showing for the U.S. gymnastics team, eighth at the 1989 World Championships, since they won the gold at Los Angeles in 1984 — while the Soviets stayed away.

The Soviets, world and Olympic champions, won five of the six events, but the United States outscored the Soviets on the high bar with dazzling routines.

"We intimidated them on high bar," U.S. coach Ed Burch said after the meet.

The strong performance on the high bar, including a 9.9 by 19-year-old Trent Dimas in the third rotation, put the Americans into second place ahead of the Chinese.

"This is an important step for us, especially since next year... we'll be hosting the world championships," Burch said.

"We'll catch them in two years," said Dimas.

Asked if the Soviets performed as well as they expected, coach Leonid Arkaev said: "We don't care too much about the difference in scores, we just wanted to play better."

Few of the athletes from the teams' 1988 Olympic squads competed in the 6,216-seat Spokane Coliseum.

stead of the usual six. Only the three biggest scores were counted.

Burch admitted that the United States could have a more difficult time with a six-man format.

"We don't have the depth that the Soviets do," he said.

The top 16 finishers from the team competition, with no more than two athletes from each nation, qualified for the individual all-around competition Saturday.

China overcame a slow start Friday to beat Peru in women's volleyball, as competition began with a rematch of a 1988 Olympic medal game.

The Chinese women, who won the bronze in Seoul, beat silver-medalist Peru 15-5, 7-15, 15-13, 15-7.

The Soviets, who won the gold medal at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, faced the United States women in a later match.

"Seoul was a big game. This was for friendship, so we were not so nervous," Chinese player Li Guojun said through an interpreter. "This game was not as touch, but we both could have played better."

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Britain's Backley sets world javelin record

LONDON (AP) — Javelin thrower Steve Backley reckoned his rival had borrowed the world record he borrowed from him.

So, to get it back, he borrowed his rival's javelin.

The 21-year-old Briton threw the Nemeth javelin that Czechoslovak Jan Zelezny had used to set the world mark and hurled it 90.98 metres, more than a metres longer than the record.

"I picked up the Nemeth because everyone else was using it," Backley said. "I always said he had borrowed the record from me. I knew I would get it back and it was great to do it here in front of all the British fans."

When Backley and Zelezny met head to head in an International Amateur Athletic Federation Grand Prix meet at Crystal Palace Friday, the world mark was less than a week old.

At the Bislett games in Oslo, Zelezny bettered Backley's world mark by 8 centimetres, lifting the record to 89.66 metres with the Nemeth. The Briton was there to witness it.

But the Czechoslovak barely had time to take the wrapping off his world record before Backley snatched it back Friday with the first 90-metre throw using the safer type of Javelin introduced

by world track chiefs six years ago.

Backley, who usually uses a Sanvik javelin, previously was unimpressed with the Nemeth, which is rated aerodynamically better.

Even his Sanvik throws went further than anything Zelezny could muster on a warm, balmy night in southern London.

Backley started with 86.40 metres, followed it with 85.88, again with the Sanvik. His first throw with Zelezny's Nemeth flew 89.20, just short of the world mark. And his final throw of 90.98 seemed to hang in the air for several breathtaking seconds before it hit the ground the other side of the world record mark.

Zelezny's best throw was 85.34 metres.

"This is like a dream come true," Backley said. "The 90-metres barrier has been there too long. It has always been my aim."

Backley's world record throw earned him an \$18,000 bonus, paid by British track chiefs, because it was accomplished on a bone track.

And it capped a trio of impressive bonn performances by sprint stars Linford Christie, Jon Regis and Colin Jackson, and a Kenyan 1-2-3 in the 300 metres.

Lemond leads in final stage of Tour de France

LAC DE VASSIVIERE, France (R) — Defending champion Greg Lemond took the Tour de France leader's yellow jersey for the first time in a race against the clock Saturday, virtually sealing victory before Sunday's final stage.

The American, who has been trailing surprise leader Claudio Chiappucci of Italy by a five-second margin for the past three days, finally came to the fore as expected in the 45.5-kilometre individual time trial 20th stage.

He clocked one hour three minutes 37 seconds to record a crushing victory over his Italian rival by two minutes 21 seconds and take a comfortable looking lead into the final stage.

Lemond, who finished fifth in the time trial won in one hour two minutes 40 seconds by Eric Breukink of the Netherlands, had lost more than 10 minutes to the Italian after a freak breakaway in the first stage of the three-week race.

Barring accidents, Lemond looks certain to win his third Tour de France title on the Champs Elysees in Paris Sunday at the end of a flat 182.5-kilometre ride from Breteigny-Sur-Orge which gives the Italian little chance of making up lost time.

It was the second year in succession that Lemond swung the

destiny of the title in the final, decisive time trial.

He overturned a 50-second deficit last year to beat Laurent Fignon of France by eight seconds, the smallest winning margin in the history of the tour.

Lemond, a master of the art of racing against the clock, effectively grabbed the overall lead in the first 10-kilometres of the time trial around the Lac de Vassiviere.

He opened up an 11-second margin over Chiappucci at the first intermediate time at 10.2 kilometres and steadily extended it.

The plucky Italian bled on bravely until well past the halfway stage but began to tire badly towards the end of a bumpy and relatively demanding course on a day in which excessive heat sapped at his strength.

At 33 kilometres, he was just over one minute down and he lost almost 80 seconds more on the last 12 kilometres as Lemond sped away from him.

The American, using the triathletes handlebar loop which gave him the crucial aerodynamic advantage over Fignon last year, started second to last in the time trial, three minutes before Chiappucci.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Algeria wins African Judo title

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria captured the 12th African Judo Team Championship Friday night by beating Angola 7-0. The Algerians took an early lead in the 12-nation championship which began on July 15, winning the crowd for individuals last Wednesday in both women's and men's categories. Senegal and Tunisia took third and fourth places, respectively, in the team championship. Algeria topped the overall medals table with a total of 16 for both men and women, followed by Tunisia (11), Senegal (10), Morocco (10) and defending team champions Egypt (nine).

Bubka hopes to defend European title

SEATTLE, Washington (R) — Injured Soviet pole vault world record holder Sergei Bubka has said he would not compete in the Goodwill Games next week because of back problems but hoped to defend his European championship next month. "Because of this injury all of this season for me went upside down," Bubka, who has been battling the injury since May, told reporters at a hastily called news conference. Bubka said he hoped to return to competition next month and would use the Zurich Grand Prix meeting on Aug. 15 as a springboard for the European championships starting on Aug. 27 in Split, Yugoslavia. The 26-year-old Ukrainian denied there was a major rift between him and the Soviet federation but admitted they had "routine" differences. He skipped the Soviet championships earlier this month, then competed in meetings in Nice and Barcelona where he did poorly because of the injury.

Denver re-signs Davis

DENVER (AP) — Walter Davis has signed a two-year contract with the Denver Nuggets, despite a personal plea by Michael Jordan for Davis to help the Chicago Bulls win a National Basketball Association Championship. "He called me three or four times lately. He wanted me to play on his team real bad," Davis said Thursday. "And it was very tempting to play alongside Michael Jordan and get a chance to win a championship." But Davis, 35, a 13-year veteran, chose to remain in Denver because he has a daughter about to enter grade school and a wife who has fallen in love with the Rocky Mountains, he said. Denver initially signed the 6-foot-6 (1.98-metre) Davis as a free agent in 1988 after he spent the first 11 years of his career with Phoenix. Davis was scored 18,140 points during his career, making him the 30th-leading scorer in NBA history.

Garrone advances to Estoril final

ESTORIL, Portugal (AP) — Italians Laura Garrone and Federica Bonsignori dispatched their semifinal opponents Friday, with bursts of Latin fire to earn berths in the finals of the \$100,000 Estoril Open. Garrone overpowered Argentine Patricia Tarabin 6-2, 6-2 in an effortless one-hour match at the Carcavelos Club. Bonsignori had a tougher fight against third-seeded Sabine Hack of West Germany, but finally won 2-6, 7-6 (7-4), 6-4, after a

grueling tiebreaker for the second set. The two determined players slugged it out shot-for-shot from the baselines for two hours and 38 minutes before the Italian's tenacity paid off. Despite her singles loss, Tarabin came back with a gutsy three-set win with Italian doubles partner Sandra Cecchini over Florencia Labat of Argentina and Czechoslovak Leona Laskova 6-4, 3-6, 6-4.

McMenemy named as England number 2

LONDON (R) — Former Southampton Manager Lawrie McMenemy was named Saturday as assistant to the England soccer team's new manager Graham Taylor. The 53-year-old McMenemy, who has been out of soccer for three years since resigning from Second Division Sunderland, will take up his post Monday. McMenemy, the first appointment by Taylor since he took over the England side from Bobby Robson last week, will be responsible for overseeing the England B and under-21 teams, as well as helping with the senior side. Robson's number two, Don Howe, and former England under-21 manager Dave Sexton both resigned after the World Cup last week. McMenemy, who will have a four-year contract, won the F.A. Cup with Southampton in 1976 and the Fourth Division championship as manager of Doncaster in 1969 and Grimsby in 1972.

Lupescu signs for West German club

LEVERKUSEN (R) — Romanian World Cup midfielder Ion Lupescu, has signed a three-year contract with West German First Division side Bayer Leverkusen, the club said. Lupescu, who has played nine times for his country, was transferred from Dynamo Bucharest to Leverkusen for a fee of around 1.6 million marks (\$1 million). Leverkusen, owned by the Bayer Chemical Company, said they would pay part of the transfer fee in the form of medicine for Romania, which is recovering from last year's revolution that overthrew the Ceausescu regime. Leverkusen Coach Juergen Gelsdorf and Manager Reiner Calmund decided to sign him after watching Lupescu play in Romania's World Cup group match against champions Argentina in Naples last month, the club said.

Usha to retire after Peking games

NEW DELHI (R) — India's top track athlete P.T. Usha said Saturday she would retire from competition after September's Asian Games in Peking. "I have been running for a decade now and the Peking games would be my third Asiad in a row," Usha said. "It is time I hung up my spikes while at the top." The 25-year-old Usha said she wanted to make her farewell appearance a memorable one and do well in all her four events in Peking — the 400, 200 and 100 metres and the 400 hurdles. Usha, fourth in the 400 metres hurdles at the Los Angeles Olympics — in the absence of East Bloc athletes — six years ago, was written off after a dismal showing at the 1988 Seoul games. But she came back to win four gold and two silver medals at the Asian track and field championships in Delhi last November.

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Burch admitted that the United States could have a more difficult time with a six-man format.

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Andre Agassi

Agassi, Chang advance to semifinals in Washington

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top-seeded Andre Agassi fought off five set points in the first set and overpowered Richey Reneberg 7-6, 6-0 Friday night and Michael Chang beat Todd Witsken 6-3, 6-4 to move into the semifinals of the Sovran Bank Classic.

Chang's victory gave the 1989 French Open champion his best tournament showing this year and a rematch against Agassi, who beat Chang in the French quarterfinals in May.

No. 2 seed Brad Gilbert, a finalist here in 1987 and 1989, didn't lose his serve in ousting West Germany's Michael Stich 6-3, 6-4.

Sixth-seeded Jim Grabb will play Gilbert in the other semifinal after his 6-4, 6-3 victory over Derrick Roastano, the man who duplicated his Wimbledon upset

by ousting John McEnroe in the third round.

Agassi carried the momentum into the second set, breaking

Reneberg immediately and two more times before finishing the set in 30 minutes.

Gilbert's victory over Stich, meanwhile, made it an all-American semifinal.

Gilbert, continuing the hot play that had him in the finals and the quarterfinals of his last two tournaments, gave up only three points on his serve in the first set on the way to beating the unseeded Stich.

Chang, seeded fifth, stayed on the baseline against the bigger Witsken, taking 2 hours, 2 minutes to beat the 14th seed. He took the first set with strong forehands that kept Witsken away from the net.

Agassi, competing for the first

time since his runner-up finish in

the French Open, hasn't lost a set in three matches, but faced set point five times during a 1-hour, 3-minute first set against the 7th-seeded Reneberg.

Serving with Reneberg up 6-5, Agassi clawed through 22 points, recovering from 15-40 with a service winner and using a backhand volley to get the first of nine deuces in the game.

Le Jourdain

Le Jourdain Supplément en français

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, JULY 22, 1990 7

Université de Jordanie

Le prix du savoir

L'université de Jordanie, à Amman sur la route de Sweileh, attire un nombre croissant d'étudiants, jordaniens ou étrangers. L'enseignement y est efficace et de qualité, mais le ticket d'entrée coûte cher et le système de bourses n'est pas suffisamment développé... Portrait d'une université d'élite.

L'université de Jordanie existe depuis une bonne vingtaine d'années. Ouverte à tous les bacheliers, elle a pour ambition de former des étudiants de tout le royaume afin qu'ils puissent, en quelques années, devenir les élémens moteurs de la société, et aider le pays à faire un pas en avant vers l'expansion économique et le développement social.

Les 15.609 étudiants qui sont assis actuellement sur les bancs de l'université sont une élite pour ce pays, même si leur avenir leur semble parfois incertain et aléatoire. Leur nombre important, bien supérieur à celui des années 1970, constitue un défi pour eux et pour le marché du travail. Recette contre le chômage, les études ne sont ni faciles ni rapides.

Pourquoi et comment choisit-on l'université de Jordanie plutôt qu'une autre université, jordanienne ou étrangère ? «On n'a pas pu aller ailleurs», explique une étudiante. «Nous n'avons pas assez d'argent pour faire des études à l'étranger», explique un autre. «Nous sommes trop isolés des autres universités dans le monde pour juger les autres universités», disent certains; tandis que d'autres répondent, sans faute: «Pourquoi ne pas faire des études ici, puisque tout le monde

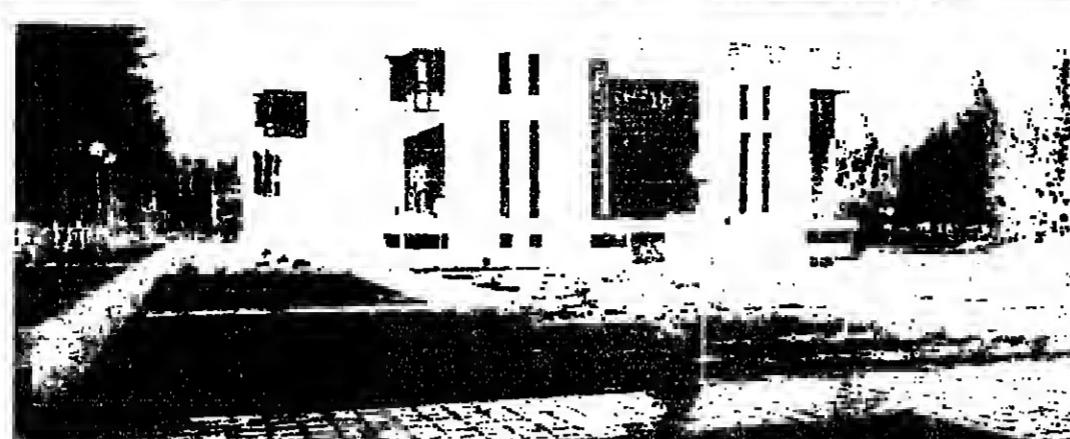
dit que c'est une bonne université?»

Pour quatre années d'études, un étudiant doit payer environ 4.500 JD (40.000 F) si l'on ajoute aux frais d'inscription, les livres, le transport et les frais d'hébergement. Tout le monde ne peut pas payer cette petite fortune. Les étudiants étrangers, notamment des autres pays arabes, doivent payer en dollars: 835 dollars pour une période universitaire de trois mois.

Consequence inévitable:

les études universitaires sont le monopole d'une élite riche. Il existe bien un système de bourses, mais celles de l'Education Nationale (30-35 JD/mois) sont réservées aux fils d'enseignants, les bourses de l'armée (30 JD/mois) aux fils de militaires et les associations charitables n'ont les moyens de verser que 500 bourses par an (remboursables après les études sans intérêts) aux enfants de familles pauvres.

Le système d'études à l'université de Jordanie, comme dans toutes les universités du pays d'ailleurs, est inspiré du modèle américain: un premier semestre de septembre à janvier, un deuxième semestre de février à juin et un semestre d'été, intensif celui-ci, car deux mois suffisent pour apprendre ce qu'on devrait étudier en quatre mois. Un système



qui plaît aux professeurs, aux étudiants et aux parents car il permet à l'étudiant, si tout va bien, de terminer ses études en trois ans au lieu de quatre. Un gain important pour les familles qui comptent souvent beaucoup sur le soutien financier de leurs enfants. De plus, beaucoup d'étudiants estiment que, sans ce trimestre d'été, ils ne sauraient pas quoi faire de leur temps, n'ayant pas, sauf quelques privilégiés, assez d'argent pour voyager.

Quand aux problèmes que ce système pose, ils ne sont pas

nombreux: il faut payer les droits d'inscription tous les trois mois; pas assez de vacances pour se reposer un peu et reprendre son état pour la prochaine rentrée et enfin pas suffisamment de temps pour consulter fréquemment la bibliothèque.

Le choix des matières, des horaires de cours et du professeur est laissé à l'étudiant. Pour beaucoup d'entre eux, c'est un pas vers l'indépendance, la liberté et la responsabilisation.

Etudiant en troisième année de psychologie, Ibrahim Zureikat estime que les matières qu'il a choisies

pour ce semestre sont de bonnes valeurs pour son avenir.

Un problème dont tout le monde souffre est la courte période des inscriptions, qui se limite à cinq ou six jours dans le meilleur des cas. Quelques centaines, parfois mille étudiants, se serrent alors dans la salle des inscriptions: c'est trop!

Pour trouver du travail plus facilement à la sortie, les étudiants s'efforcent d'obtenir la moyenne la plus élevée à l'issue de leurs études.

Turki Diab, docteur en lettres, déclare avoir choisi l'université

Trans-Manche

Le tunnel bientôt à mi-parcours

1,40 mètre à l'heure



Les tunneliers travaillent 364 jours par an.

Le 15 juin 1993, la première navette s'élancera dans le tunnel sous la Manche flamboyant neuf, et réalisera un rêve caressé depuis près de deux cents ans par des dizaines d'ingénieurs désireux de supprimer le détroit du Pas-de-Calais qui sépare la France de la Grande-Bretagne. Car c'est en 1802 qu'Albert Mathieu-Favier propose au premier consul Bonaparte, le premier projet de tunnel, l'arrête du «trajet» est une machine qui tapisse les parois de la cavité avec des voûssoirs étagés à la cadence de 1,40 mètres à l'heure. Le conducteur de l'engin est guidé par un faisceau laser et ne doit pas s'être trompé de plus de quarante centimètres au point de jonction avec les équipes creusant de l'autre côté. Environ 3.000 ouvriers travailleront sur chaque des chantiers, ouverts sur les deux rives de la Manche, vingt quatre heures sur vingt quatre et 364 jours par an, puisque seule la fête de la Sainte-Barbe, patronne des marins, est chômée...

Comment franchira-t-on la Manche lorsque l'ouvrage sera achevé? Soit avec l'un des trains à grande vitesse qui reliera la capitale britannique à Paris ou à Bruxelles; on estime que le tunnel et le TGV permettront de réduire le temps de parcours par train et ferries, entre Paris et Londres, de 51h20 aujourd'hui à 3 heures environ. Soit avec l'une des navettes ferroviaires qui embarqueront aux terminus de Sangatte et de Folkestone les voitures particulières et les camions. Les passagers demeureront à l'intérieur de leur véhicule pendant les 38 minutes que durera le trajet réalisé à la vitesse de 130 Km/h. Arrivé de l'autre côté du détroit, les

tunneliers ont apporté leurs foods à Eurotunnel oot de bonnes raisons d'espérer la rentabilité exceptionnelle de 18% qui leur a été promise puisque, dès la première année de son fonctionnement, le tunnel ne verra pas passer moins de trente millions de passagers.

de Jordanie pour y enseigner parce qu'il est amoureux d'elle. C'est mon lieu de rêve, insiste-t-il, car je sais qu'une bonne université comme celle-ci a besoin de gens qualifiés sur le plan pédagogique, scientifique et social. Ce qu'il recherche avant tout, c'est un bon contact humain avec l'étudiant, le vrai et peut-être le seul capital de la Jordanie, selon lui. Mais il souhaiterait que les portes des universités soient ouvertes à tous les milieux, avec des frais de scolarité moins importants.

Si le diplôme est le bon passeport pour l'emploi et le bon moyen de franchir de nouvelles frontières pour la Jordanie, il est indispensable de le mettre à la portée financière de tout le monde.

Osama al-Qudah

Chiffres

Au total, l'université de Jordanie compte 822 enseignants pour former 15.609 étudiants, dans ses 13 facultés.

En 1989, 2.986 étudiants sont sortis diplômés en poche (maîtrise, DEA ou doctorat) de ses murs.

Koweït-Irak. L'Irak a accusé le Koweït dans un mémorandum adressé lundi à la Ligue arabe de «voler» depuis 1980 du pétrole irakien en pompant dans le nappe du champ pétrolier de Roumala, près de la frontière commune, et de grignoter ses frontières. Bagdad a également accusé le Koweït d'inonder délibérément et en complicité avec les Emirats Arabes Unis, le marché pétrolier international en violation des quotas fixés par l'OPEP. Le Koweït a rejeté ces accusations et a demandé, dans un message adressé au secrétaire général de la Ligue arabe, de choisir une commission arabe qui serait chargée de trancher dans l'affaire de ses frontières avec l'Irak.

Sud-Liban. Les combats ont repris lundi entre le mouvement Amal (pro-syrien) et le Hezbollah (pro-iranien) qui se disputent le contrôle de la communauté chiite au Sud-Liban, faisant au moins 44 tués et 104 blessés, en majorité des militaires. Une trêve humanitaire, demandée par le Comité International de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) et acceptée par les belligérants, n'a pas été respectée, et les combats ont repris avec violence dès jeudi soir dans le massif de l'Iqlim al-Toufah.

Ben Bella. L'ancien président algérien Ahmed Ben Bella, qui est en exil en Suisse, rentrera en Algérie début septembre. Ahmed Ben Bella, président de la toute nouvelle république algérienne en 1962, renversé en 1965 par le colonel Houari Boumédiène, vivant en exil depuis 1981 après 14 ans de détention, revient au pays pour y renforcer le mouvement démocratique.

Cachemire. Les véritables discussions sur le Cachemire entre l'Inde et le Pakistan ont commencé jeudi à Islamabad après une première journée consacrée à définir avec précision les causes de la crise entre les deux pays. Ces entretiens surviennent après quelque six mois de grave tension à la frontière entre les deux pays. Le Cachemire, partagé entre l'Inde et le Pakistan, fait l'objet d'un litige territorial qui a conduit à deux des trois guerres indo-pakistanaises.

USA-Vietnam. Le secrétaire d'Etat américain, James Baker, rompt un ostracisme de 15 ans envers le Vietnam, a annoncé mercredi l'ouverture du dialogue avec Hanoï pour empêcher le retour des Khmers-Rouges au Cambodge. Washington veut dialoguer avec les Vietnamiens pour les convaincre d'exercer leur influence sur M. Hun Sen afin de créer les conditions propices à des élections libres au Cambodge. Il a affirmé qu'il ne s'agissait pas d'une normalisation des rapports avec le Vietnam, avec lequel les Etats-Unis ont toujours pas établi de relations diplomatiques depuis la fin de la guerre en 1975.

Séisme. Le tremblement de terre qui a frappé lundi dernier les Philippines a probablement coûté la vie à 700 personnes et fait un millier de blessés, selon les derniers bilans officiels. Plus de 400 personnes, dont au moins cinq étrangers, ont été officiellement déclarées tuées par le séisme, qui avait atteint une intensité de 7,7 sur l'échelle ouverte de Richter.

Trafic. Une enquête administrative sur une affaire de trafic d'armes entre le Liban et la France a été demandée par le ministre des Affaires Etrangères français, M. Roland Dumas. Des armes achetées au Liban par des policiers travaillant au service de sécurité de l'ambassade de France à Beyrouth auraient été revendues à la pègre française et auraient notamment été utilisées lors d'attaques de transports de fonds en France.

France-Japon. Les premiers ministres japonais et français, MM. Toshihiko Kaifu et Michel Rocard sont convenus jeudi à Tokyo d'intensifier à l'avenir leur coopération en politique étrangère et envisagent la création d'un comité pour des échanges de vues réguliers entre les deux pays.

Infexion. Conséquence des grands changements survenus à l'Est, le budget 1991 de la Défense française est un budget d'infexion. Ce budget, fixé à 195 milliards de F (35,5 milliards de dollars), affiche une hausse de 3% par rapport à 1990, soit à peine plus que l'inflation prévue pour cette l'an prochain (2,5%), mais nettement moins que la progression moyenne du budget (5,4%).

Canal-Enfants. Une septième chaîne de télévision, Canal-Enfants, a été autorisée à émettre par faisceau hertzien par le Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel, organisme chargé en France de la régulation de l'audiovisuel. Chaîne à péage, Canal-Enfants présentera un programme ininterrompu de 7h30 à 21h30 au plus tard, variable en fonction du calendrier scolaire et composé à 35% de fiction, 15% de dessins animés, 10% de documentaires et 40% de jeux et de productions originales.

LA SEMAINE...

De Suleiman Suleiman

«Pétra» : le drame



Non, il ne s'agit pas de la célèbre cité rose au sud de la Jordanie, mais de la jeune banque qui vient de décider à l'âge de 12 ans à Amman. C'est un véritable drame socio-économique et financier. Déjà en février dernier, les employés de la banque avaient protesté contre la catastrophe. Ils ont mené un mouvement courageux de protestation et de revendication. Les employés et leur syndicat ont gagné un soutien au niveau national. Ils ont signé avec l'administration provisoire de la banque un accord honnorable. Aujourd'hui 700 employés de la banque Pétra ont perdu leur travail. Leur boîte est en train d'être liquidée par la décision gouvernementale du Comité de la sécurité économique. Ceci est d'autant plus paradoxal que le licenciement de ces centaines d'employés survient au moment où la Chambre des députés débat sur le problème du chômage! Qui peut croire encore à la «politique» du pouvoir exercutif dans ce domaine?

Certes, certains responsables, notamment le gouverneur de la Banque Centrale, ont rassuré les employés de la banque Pétra. Mais ces déclarations n'ont pas «force de loi» comme l'a dit le chef du syndicat des employés de banque il y a quelques jours. Dans les milieux syndicaux, on affirme que les autres banques peuvent intégrer deux cents employés au maximum. En attendant, une grande partie des employés se retrouvent dans la rue du jour au lendemain. Ils vivent dans une inquiétude profonde sur leur vie et leur avenir professionnel.

A qui la faute? C'est connu: la liquidation de la banque est l'aboutissement d'un imbroglio. L'opinion publique n'a pas encore ressenti la volonté de la part des autorités de dévoiler toute la vérité sur le sujet. Au cours de la période du «boom économique», en effet, l'ancienne direction de la banque, notamment son P.D.G., Ahmad Chalabi, s'est permis de tester des opérations financières toutes sortes qui échappaient au contrôle de la Banque Centrale. En août de l'année dernière, on a démis le Conseil d'Administration de ses fonctions et on a poursuivi M. Chalabi judiciairement. Celui-ci avait déjà quitté le pays illégalement quelques jours au paravant. Résultat: la banque est en faillite de quelque 250 millions de dinars. C'est la somme, dit-on, que M. Chalabi aurait emporté avec lui à l'étranger.

Quoiqu'il en soit, cette somme doit être payée ou remboursée par quelqu'un ou, mieux, récupérée. Un an après la dissolution du Conseil d'Administration, le gouvernement a trouvé la solution: la somme sera remboursée par la Banque Centrale, autant dire l'argent du peuple. De plus, les employés seront en grande partie chômeurs. Quant aux responsables de ce drame pour ne pas dire les voleurs en biens, ils passent leurs vacances paisiblement et agréablement en ce moment en Europe!

Nous allons attendre pour voir si les représentants du peuple au Parlement vont approuver ou non cette solution du problème. Notons que le gouvernement a eu recours au soi-disant «Comité de la sécurité économique» - issu de l'état d'urgence et des lois martiales - pour faire passer sa décision.

Un moment où l'enquête sur une dizaine de cas de corruption, est-il admissible de clore le dossier de la banque Pétra de cette manière?

Il est certain que l'affaire de Pétra et d'autres banques (Jordan-Gulf bank, etc...) doivent ouvrir les yeux sur les lacunes qui existent dans le système de contrôle établi par la Banque Centrale. Il s'agit de sommes d'argent qui appartiennent au peuple, même si ces banques sont des établissements privés. Est-il possible, par exemple, d'étendre l'autorité de la Cour des comptes sur les grands établissements financiers? Comment peut-on empêcher la répétition de l'affaire Pétra? Bref, nous avons besoin d'introduire des réformes substantielles dans le système bancaire du pays afin de le purifier de la corruption et de redéfinir son rôle et son fonctionnement, au service de l'économie du pays.

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Controverse autour du festival de Jerash

Entre espoir et déception, les visiteurs du festival de Jerash ont changé cette année d'attitude et d'opinion sur le contenu de cet événement pourtant remarquable.

«En comparaison avec les années précédentes, le festival a pas assisté au festival cette année régressive, estime un ingénieur qui a assisté à la plupart des manifestations des deux premiers jours. A mon avis, la principale raison de la régression du festival cette année est que les gens ne vont plus là-bas pour participer et profiter de ses aspects culturels».

D'autres personnes qui n'ont pas assisté au festival cette année expriment le même point de vue, considérant qu'il n'y a pas assez de groupes comme contrairement à ce qu'on avait observé pendant toute l'histoire du festival.

De plus, le spectacle de Nabul Sh'eil, un chanteur très célèbre, a été marqué par un incident au début du festival: des gens ont distribué des brochures de présentation du festival pendant qu'il chantait et se sont plongés dans cette lecture au lieu de l'écouter. Ces perturbations et le désordre général qui s'est ensuivi, ont contribué à faire de ce spectacle un échec.

D'autres personnes, qui ont assisté au festival, critiquent le manque de profondeur des activités culturelles proposées. «Un objectif du festival est d'enrichir les mouvements culturels en Jordanie, en offrant au public l'ensemble des créateurs jordaniens du moment, dans les domaines différents de la culture et des arts, mais je crois qu'on est loin d'avoir atteint cet objectif», considère une institutrice d'Irbid.

«Je crois que les activités culturelles ne sont pas d'un niveau assez élevé. En fait, elles ont besoin de la coopération du public plus que de celle des autorités compétentes», explique un étudiant en magistère à l'Université de Jordanie.

Cependant, d'autres gens se plaignent de ce qu'ils appellent «le comportement des gens basse et de la sécher des places et des produits à consommer sur place». «Pour vous dire la vérité, j'aime bien aller au festival de

Groupe de Fuheis

Un succès mérité

Ce soir, le groupe folklorique de Fuheis (GFF) animera le théâtre sud, au festival de Jerash, par sa musique arabe classique et ses chansons tirées du folklore jordanien. Il s'agit d'un groupe distingué qui a connu jusqu'à aujourd'hui un succès et une popularité assez grande, à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur de la Jordanie (Syrie, Irak, Tunisie, etc.). Le Jourdain a rencontré à cette occasion un des principaux animateurs du groupe, Sakhr Hattar, 27 ans, professeur à l'Institut National de Musique.

Nous sommes finalement partis et on a fait plusieurs heures de piste. A un certain moment, notre guide s'est arrêté, a prononcé un MOT, et voilà qu'au beau milieu du désert surgit le château des fées. Deux étages et sa terrasse bordée de crêtes. Il était bâti en argile pétrière avec du chaume, le soleil le faisait briller d'un éclat précieux. Une fois à l'intérieur, il fallait s'habiter un peu à la pénombre car toutes les fenêtres donnaient sur la cour intérieure du château: cette pénombre empêchait les monches et la grande chaleur d'y entrer. La cour centrale du rez-de-chaussée était dominée par une galerie, un porche qui courait tout autour du premier étage, dont les chambres elles aussi étaient ainsi protégées. Des fentes savamment ouvertes dans les murs permettaient à une brise très agréable de circuler dans tous le bâtiment. Et l'odeur... Comment pourrai-je jamais oublier l'odeur de cet endroit féérique? Toute la lingerie était gardée dans de gros coffres en bois de santal rouge. C'était enivrant, incroyablement bon. Plusieurs conches de tapis rendaient le sol moelleux et, dans le salon, des divans bas couraient tout autour des murs; des piles de coussins colorés étaient là pour y appuyer les coudes. Des serviteurs se tenaient près des portes, prêts à satisfaire tous nos désirs: ils étaient debout sur une seule jambe, dont le mollet servait d'appui à l'autre jambe, qui s'y reposait pliée à angle droit. De temps à autre, ils inversaient la position. Visages, mains et pieds de tout le monde étaient râçés, élégants. Je me sentais gauche, j'étais consciente de la différence qui existait entre mes mains, qui sans être élégantes avaient du caractère et mes pieds qui étaient épais.

Dans la cour, une dizaine de fancons de chasse posaient sur leurs perchoirs. Il y avait une ressemblance entre le profil des hommes et celui des oiseaux. Quelque chose d'affilé, de tranchant, une précision du regard, une intensité rapide. Entre Emir, visiteurs, secrétaires et serviteurs, habillés de la même façon, en blanc immaculé, une familiarité spontanée, naturelle, respectueuse. J'en avais le souffle coupé. Comme c'est l'habitude du pays, tous les habitants du coin et ceux qui transitent avaient le droit d'accéder au «Divan» et l'Emir était responsable de tout ce qui les touchait et leur arrivait. A table, nous étions servis par le prince en personne et ses serviteurs: ils allaient manger, après nous, ensemble. Dans nos chambres à coucher, des tables étaient couvertes de pyramides de fruits, de sucreries et de plusieurs carafes contenant du jus de grenades, de citrons, de raisin. Au hammam, on puisait l'eau avec des bols d'argent ciselés.

Deux ans passent. Tout à fait par hasard, je reprends en main la lampe d'opaline. Elle est fêlée. Machinalement, je caresse cette blessure qui me fait de la peine; la porte sonne. Le messager se présente avec une lettre de l'Emir qui nous invite de nouveau. A bien y regarder, est-ce que le messager est vraiment le même que l'autre fois? Il lui ressemble sûrement mais son expression a changé. Je n'y pense plus et, le jour venu, nous nous mettons en route. Au même endroit où, la fois précédente, il avait prononcé le MOT, le messager s'arrête et, l'air hagard, marmonne quelque chose. J'attends avec trépidation l'apparition que je connais mais qui n'a rien perdu de sa fascination. Non, le messager s'est trompé, ce n'est pas le château qu'il fait apparaître, mais une triste villa en ciment armé, toutes fenêtres ouvertes au dehors. Plus de hammam aux bols d'argent, plus de coffres en bois de santal, plus de divans ni de coussins. A leur place, des lustres de Murano, des fauteuils de style Louis XV et des armoires de style vénitien du XVIII^e siècle... enfin presque.

«Non! Non! Non!, je crie.

J'ai peur de ne plus pouvoir accéder à la dimension où le beau château m'attend.

Le génie messager essaye encore, mais quelque chose s'est passé dans ma mémoire. Il a oublié le MOT. Je m'en veux de ne pas l'avoir écouté la première fois. Comment me résigner au fait que je n'ai pas eu la présence d'esprit d'Ali-Baba?

J'attends toujours qu'un génie messager vienne frapper à ma porte pour me reconduire par le bon chemin... Vale, Egeria! Je ne t'écrirai plus pendant un certain temps car je pars en vacances. On se retrouvera en septembre. Je penserai beaucoup à toi et, dès mon retour, je te raconterai mes expériences de voyage.

Propos recueillis par Salehman Sweiss

able. Ils expriment, pour une grande majorité d'entre eux, une insatisfaction quant à la qualité artistique et culturelle de ses spectacles.

Jerash, mais cette année, j'ai été très étonnée par le fait que j'ai été beaucoup plus dérangée que les années précédentes par le comportement des hommes devant notre groupe de femmes, raconte une participante. Un homme qui était complètement saoul a agressé une fille de notre groupe pendant qu'elle était en train d'acheter des boissons et nous avons dû faire appeler la police pour qu'il mette fin à ses actes.

Le hausse des prix au festival a été un autre élément essentiel du renoncement de beaucoup de gens à y aller plusieurs fois comme les années précédentes.

«Le fait que les prix des raffraîchissements et des denrées soient doublés au festival nous a découragés de participer à certains événements cette année», affirme un étudiant.

«Je crois que les activités culturelles ne sont pas d'un niveau assez élevé. En fait, elles ont besoin de la coopération du public plus que de celle des autorités compétentes», explique un étudiant en magistère à l'Université de Jordanie.

Cependant, d'autres gens se plaignent de ce qu'ils appellent «le comportement des gens basse et de la sécher des places et des produits à consommer sur place».

«Pour vous dire la vérité, j'aime bien aller au festival de

Sakhr Hattar, 27 ans, professeur à l'Institut National de Musique.

Le Jourdain: Voulez-vous bien retracer un peu la genèse et l'évolution de votre groupe?

Sakhr Hattar: En 1976-1977, il y avait un centre culturel dans notre ville, Fuheis (à 20 Km à l'ouest d'Amman). Moi et quelques amis, nous y entraînions des adolescents, jusqu'à ce que le centre ferme ses portes en 1978. En 1980, il a commencé à étudier la musique. Vu l'absence de débouchés pour les musiciens dans le pays, mes amis et moi avons commencé à nous entraîner pour former un groupe. Nous voulions également affirmer l'existence de notre musique arabe originale face à l'invasion de la musique occidentale qui a assailli les jeunes du pays. Au début de 1982, nous étions 12 garçons et 8 filles, la plupart des amis, pour lancer le groupe. Nous nous préparions à faire notre première apparition au III^e festival de Jerash en juillet 1982 (reporté à juillet 1983 à cause de la guerre du Liban). Nous avons beaucoup travaillé et nous avons annoncé notre première apparition par une grande campagne de publicité. Les billets ont été vite vendus et un grand nombre de personnes ont dû rester dehors, frustrées. Le succès que nous avons rencontré en 1983 nous a encouragés à aller encore plus loin. Depuis, nous participons au festival de Jerash chaque année, sauf en 1989.

LJ: Pourquoi?

SH: Pour des raisons que je n'aime pas évoquer ici... C'est du passé.



Groupe de Fuheis réhabilitant la musique arabe classique.

LJ: Avez-vous animé des soirées en dehors du festival de Jerash?

SH: Oui, en l'honneur de la population de Fuheis, qui nous a soutenus beaucoup, et en mai dernier avec la collaboration du club des jeunes à Fuheis. Nous avons aussi animé quelques soirées à Amman, mais c'est rare.

En revanche, nous avons eu l'honneur de représenter la Jordanie au festival de Carthage (en Tunisie) en 1987, et au festival de Bebel (en Irak) en 1988 et en 1989. C'est le Ministère de la culture qui nous a demandé d'y participer.

LJ: Comment vous débrouillez-vous financièrement?

SH: D'abord, nous ne travaillons pas en permanence pour le groupe. Les quatre premières années nous nous sommes et sur la population de Fuheis. En 1987, le Ministère de la culture nous a soutenus un peu. Pour le moment, ce qui compte pour nous c'est le soutien moral des autorités.

LJ: Le nom officiel de votre groupe est «le groupe de Fuheis pour la réparation du patrimoine», pourquoi ce nom?

SH: Nous croyons que la musique arabe classique est beaucoup plus riche que le folklore jordanien. Or le public jordanien n'avait pas l'occasion d'apprendre à avoir un contact direct avec cette musique. Nous voulons résusciter cette belle musique (celle de l'Andalousie par exemple) et la faire apprécier par le public arabe (nos cassettes se vendent en Syrie, en Jordanie, en Irak et ailleurs).

En même temps, nous considérons ce travail comme une introduction indispensable pour développer la chanson arabe moderne et, enfin, pour aider à développer la culture artistique du public arabe en général. Nous devons faire face à l'invasion des chansons importées de loin.

LJ: Qu'y a-t-il de nouveau au IX^e festival de Jerash?

SH: Il y aura beaucoup de chansons du folklore jordanien qui seront interprétées pour la première fois. Il y aura également deux nouveaux jeunes joueurs de luth, âgés de 13 et 14 ans. Je terminerai la soirée par un récital de luth en solo.

Propos recueillis par Salehman Sweiss

A L'AFFICHE

FOCUS

Cendrillon à Jerash

Sur le compte du bien, du mal et du laid

Le Haya Arts Center d'Amman présentera les mardi 24, mercredi 25 et jeudi 26 au soir, à Jerash, un spectacle de quatorze marionnettes, en langage populaire jordanien, sur l'histoire de Cendrillon.

Cette version de Hassan Kambachawi, réalisée par Nabil Sawalha, ne s'appuie ni sur le conte célèbre de Charles Perrault (*Les contes de ma mère l'Oye*) ni sur la version non moins connue des frères Grimm (*Les contes de l'enfant et du foyer*). L'auteur y a pris les indications générales du scénario et les a adaptées à la mode orientale. La structure -présentée dans le monde entier en plus de 500 versions différentes, dont la plus ancienne remonte à la Chine du IX^e siècle- reste intacte: malmenée par sa belle-mère et ses deux demi-sœurs, et malgré tous leurs complot, la fidèle Cendrillon -avec l'aide d'une fée bienveillante- réussit à faire la rencontre d'un prince qui sera son bonheur.

Pour les créateurs de la version jordanienne, il ne faisait aucun doute que l'histoire de Cendrillon évoquait le conflit éternel entre le bien et le mal. Ce qui opposait l'auteur et le réalisateur, avant qu'ils ne se mettent finalement d'accord, c'était la façon de représenter ces deux antipodes.

«Je voulais que mes poupées reflètent clairement les notions du bien et du mal», dit Hassan Kambachawi, qui est aussi le fabricant des marionnettes, que ma Cendrillon soit une beauté éblouissante et que la marâtre qui la tourmente, ainsi que ses deux filles jalouses, soient aussi laides que des poux.»

«*«Retour»*, s'est alors écrit Nabil Sawalha. «J'ai expliqué à Hassan, poursuit-il, qu'il nous fallait, pour être vraisemblables, une conception plus nuancée. Faute de quoi ces correspondances -le bien avec un visage beau et le mal avec une mine laide-donneraient -surtout au jeune public- une idée fausse de ce qui constitue le laid dans la vie. Le bien ne fait pas toujours le bien et le laid n'incarne pas toujours le mal.»

Consequences: Cendrillon se transforme en fille de beauté moyenne et les demi-sœurs laiderons, en demoiselles attrayantes. Même la cruelle belle-mère se révèle avoir été une beauté en son temps. Quant au prince, c'est un jeune homme plus charmé que charmant, une qualité qui plaît à son animateur-interprète, Munir Qaddoumi, un des comédiens qui présentent leur voix aux quatorze fantoches et marionnettes à gaine et à tête.

«Les nuances de Nabil font l'intérêt de ce rôle, estime Munir Qaddoumi, jaugant les mérites de son prince. Comme il ne correspond pas à une idée préconçue du prince des contes et n'est pas d'emblée une personne frappante, je suis contraint d'évoquer ses vertus par sa façon de parler et de se comporter. J'ai bien étudié ses qualités. C'est un jeune homme de caractère accommodant et charitable, qui veut le bien de tous. Il a une beauté naturelle. Voilà ce qui fait son charme.»

L'interprétation de la fée marraine, en revanche -un problème épique du spectacle- ne fut résolue que grâce à l'idée conventionnelle que l'on peut avoir d'une fée.

En arabe, explique le réalisateur Nabil Sawalha, le mot «djennet» évoque un être de disposition méchante. Or la fée dans ce drame représente la conscience du public qui cherche à récompenser Cendrillon pour son humilité et sa dévotion. Nous avons résolu le dilemme en créant une poupée radieuse qui apparaît comme un élément presque impénétrable, même à Cendrillon, et nous avons ajouté un qualificatif à l'appellation: elle est maintenant «djennet al-kheïra», la fée de la bonté.»

A propos du fameux soulier, grâce auquel le Prince reconnaîtra Cendrillon, et dont on se demande depuis des lustres si doit être en velours ou en verre, l'interprète du prince, Munir Qaddoumi se contente de sourire, tandis que l'auteur se prépare à exprimer un avis: «Ni en verre, ni en velours, dit Hassan Kambachawi, mais il lui conviendra à ravir.»

Sami Kamal

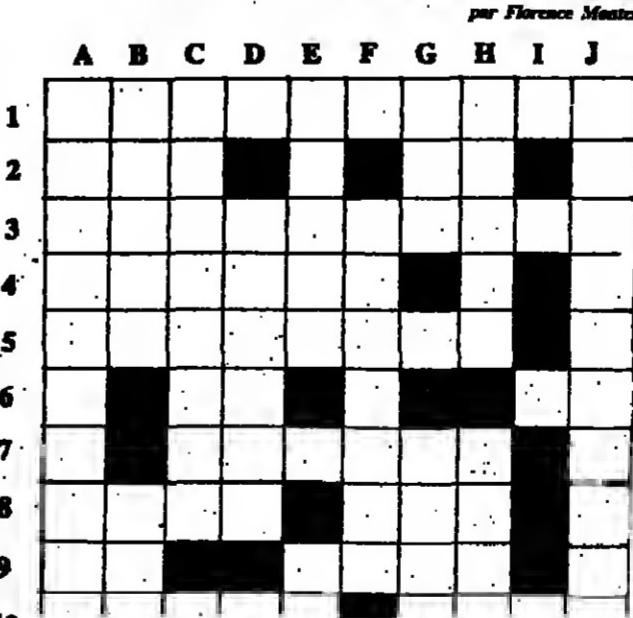
DIVERS

Mariettes. Représentation de Cendrillon (Cinderella), d'après le conte de Charles Perrault, par le Haya Arts Centre. Voir Focus. Festival de Jerash, les mardi 24, mercredi 25 et jeudi 26 juillet, de 19h30 à 21h. Prix des places: 1 JD.

JEU X

Mots croisés

par Florence Montel



Horizontalement:

1: pour départager. 2: pronom personnel; lettre grecque. 3: réponné par la morale. 4: exprime. 5: pour le fil et les aiguilles. 6: refus. 7: interjection. 8: faute. 9: mesure; 100 m2. 9: spécialité. G: pain; repas le bulletin de vote. H: satellite de la Terre. 10: coupe le peupl. 10: bois. I: instruments de musique.

(Solution la semaine prochaine)

Solution de la grille N. 19:

Horizontalement.

1: chanteuses. 2: rotir; aise. 3: orties. 4: urine; abbé. 5: seres; étrées. 6: tue; Sidon. 7: ires; édit. 8: strate. 9: lit; items. 10: émanées.

Verticalement.

1: elles vivent à l'est du Rhin. 2: chapeau à deux pointes. 3: réponné par la morale. 4: exprime. 5: pour le fil et les aiguilles. 6: refus. 7: interjection. 8: faute. 9: mesure; 100 m2. 9: spécialité. G: pain; repas le bulletin de vote. H: satellite de la Terre. 10: coupe le peupl. 10: bois. I: instruments de musique.

(Solution la semaine prochaine)

CINEMA

TELEVISION

DIMANCHE

17h45 - Deuxième documentaire. Dessin animé. Documentaire. Documentaire sur la communication chez les chimpanzés. Documentaire. 18h35 - «C'est pas magique». Documentaire. 19h00 - «Le journal». 19h15 - Caméra de nos voisins. Documentaire de musiques classiques.

EDIMBOURGH

ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

Italian aid plan gets cool response

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Community (EC) has reacted coolly to Italy's proposals for a new development bank for Mediterranean countries and for EC countries to spend one per cent of gross national product (GNP) on foreign aid. Diplomats said both ideas were referred to the European Commission for study. Italy took over the EC presidency on July 1, keen to intensify links with Mediterranean countries during its six-month stint. Some ministers questioned the need for a new financial institution for the region, the diplomats said. Britain criticised the one per cent target for foreign aid, half for developing countries with the rest split equally between the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe, saying it was wrong to mix traditional aid with new efforts to help reformers in Eastern Europe. Denmark, the EC country which spends most proportionally on aid, pointed out that the Community was already falling short of a U.N. aid target of 0.7 per cent of GNP and called talk of an increase premature.

Foreign investments in Indonesia surge

JAKARTA (AP) — Growing labour and production costs in other countries have made Indonesia comparatively better place to invest, a trend reflected in growing foreign investment in the first half of this year, a senior official has said. Total foreign investment in the first six months of 1990 reached \$4.57 billion, almost equaling the \$4.71 billion posted during all of 1989, said chairman of the investment coordinating board Sanyoto Sastrowardoyo. "External factors, including the high appreciation of some foreign currencies, which makes Indonesian products more competitive, in addition to high production and labour costs" were encouraging more foreign investment, he said. Sastrowardoyo said the government was seeking to encourage more investment by foreign firms through deregulation and other improvements in the investment climate. Japan accounts for 24 per cent of all foreign investment in Indonesia, with \$8.24 billion in more than 300 projects, followed by Hong Kong, with \$3.44 billion in 159 projects, the United States, with \$1.95 billion in 109 projects and West Germany, with \$1.85 billion in 46 projects.

Malta signs contracts with oil firms

VALLETTA (AP) — Malta has signed a production-sharing contract with the American oil company (Amoco) and the Australian subsidiary BHP for oil and gas exploration in two offshore blocks in the Maltese channel. Prime Minister Eddie Fenech Adami called the agreement a landmark in the island's oil exploration programme. The agreement covers 4,200 square kilometres north of the island and is part of a much larger area opened for exploration two years ago. The area lies close to the rich Italian Vega oilfield. The production sharing contract is for 30 years with the first seven being allocated for exploration. Under the contract the two companies would have to spend at least \$23 million in the first three years. They must also drill at least two wells, the first within 18 months, the second within 30 months.

Ford to build \$80m plant in Hungary

BUDAPEST (R) — The Ford Motor Company has announced it would set up an \$80 million parts plant in Hungary. Bruce Blythe, Ford Europe's vice president, told a news conference the plant would produce 3.2 million ignition coils and fuel pumps a year starting in 1992, to be used in Ford vehicles produced in Germany, Britain, Spain, Belgium and Portugal. The scheme, approved by the Hungarian government, would enable Ford to import cars to Hungary funded by the export sales of the components produced at the plant. "Ford's goal was to establish a world class operation in Hungary, fully competitive...with the best automotive components manufactured anywhere," a company statement read. With Japan's Suzuki and General Motors (G.M.), Ford is the third Western automaker in Hungary. No passenger cars are scheduled for manufacture until 1992, when the Suzuki and the G.M. plant begin operating. Blythe said no site had been chosen for the plant, where 200 people would be employed to produce "components critical for achieving low exhaust emission levels that would become standard across Europe in the mid-1990s."

PRB bankruptcy raises security fears

BRUSSELS (R) — The bankruptcy of Poudrieres Reunies de Belgique (PRB) a British-owned munitions and explosives producer in Belgium, has created security problems, Belgian Interior Minister Louis Tobback has said. "It is not like a biscuit maker going bankrupt. We cannot leave everything lying around while waiting for someone to take care of it," he told Belgian radio. PRB's outgoing managing director, John Pike, told Reuters: "There is a large amount of explosive material stored in certain sites." Tobback said he would meet local government and company representatives and police and defence officials to explore ways to ensuring security at PRB's five factories. The company, which employs 1,300 people, was declared bankrupt by the Brussels Commercial Court despite having 25 orders worth five billion Belgian francs (\$147 million) on its order books. Three receivers were named to wind up the affairs of PRB, owned by Astra Holdings PLC of Britain. PRB rejected an offer by two French arms concerns to acquire part of the company because it would have put major financial strains on Astra.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Saturday, July 20, 1990			
Central Bank official rates			
Buy	Sell	French franc	120.7
		Japanese yen (for 100)	445.7
U.S. dollar	663.0	Dutch guilder	359.5
Swiss franc	1203.1	Swedish crown	111.5
Deutschmark	404.9	Italian lira (for 100)	55.3
Swiss franc	474.0	Belgian franc (for 10)	200.9
	476.8		202.1

Cinema RAINBOW Tel: 625155

DEADLY PURSUIT

Performances: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema CONCORD Tel: 677420

Dureid Lahham / Madeline Tabar in

KAFROUN

Performances: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

China criticises conditions on aid to developing nations

BEIJING (AP) — Rich countries have no right to attach political conditions to financial aid to poorer nations, an official Chinese commentary said Friday.

"The imposition of one's political will and values upon others cannot be accepted by any independent sovereign nation," said the commentary, which was first published in the overseas edition of the People's Daily and excerpted by the Xinhua news agency.

China has argued that its policy on human rights is an internal matter and that foreign countries have no right to criticise it for executing demonstrators.

The commentary maintained that Third World countries are unfairly treated in trade, finance and debt issues "under the present irrational international economic order."

"Actually, those developed Western countries, some of whom... cruelly exploited and looted the African continent, should bear responsibilities for the heavy economic burdens upon the African states," it said.

Assistance "should be offered neither with pre-conditions nor for privileges," the commentary said.

The argument is one China has made with increasing frequency over the past year as, shunned by the West, it has rediscovered its 1960s role as a champion of the Third World.

Premier Li Peng told Niger's foreign minister, Sani Bakou, in Beijing Wednesday that the gap between rich and poor countries is growing.

"These phenomena are caused by unequal exchanges and the unreasonable international economic order," Li said. Xinhua said China agreed to give Niger a loan but did not say how much.

Bako is one of a long line of African and Arab officials who have visited China in the past year, while most Western countries have sent only a few, relatively low-level officials. China in turn has sent an unusually large number of delegations to the Third World.

The People's Daily commentary did not mention the parallel between tied aid to African countries.

DELUXE FURNISHED APARTMENT FOR RENT

Ground floor with garden, consisting of three bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, central heating, excellent Chinese furniture and a telephone.

Location: Fifth Circle / opposite Arab Bank and Al Hindi Pharmacy.

For more information please call: Tel: 814106 Amman

ON SALE

Peugeot 305 Station Wagon; model 1984; duty unpaid. Call 05-551781, working hours 9-14 — ask for Barbara.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

Consists of three bedrooms, one of them master, washing room, garage, garden with trees, two verandas, independent entrance. Also we have automatic washing machine (PHILIPS) and two single beds FOR SALE.

Location: Al Jubalha, near the Royal Scientific Society.

Call tel: 847830.

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Consisting of 3 bedrooms, 2 salons, 3 bathrooms, dining room, with telephone, excellent furniture, wall to wall carpet and central heating.

Location: Jabal Amman - opposite Amman Hotel — main entrance.

Please call tel: 673561 Amman.

UNIQUE TEACHING EXPERIENCE

A Jordanian female teacher with the following qualifications is wanted on a full-time basis to help young children with their school work and extra-curricular activities:

- 1 - University degree, preferably in Education.
- 2 - Fluency in Arabic and English.
- 3 - Exposure to different cultures through living/studying abroad.
- 4 - Experience and good interaction with children.
- 5 - A dynamic, energetic, cheerful and sports-oriented personality.

Kindly send resume and a recent photograph to:
P.O. Box 7111
Amman, Jordan

Study looks into U.S. share trading technology

WASHINGTON (AP) — While U.S. securities markets lead the world in efficiency and fairness, they're not quite ready for the international arena because they lag in implementing the latest technology, according to a congressional study.

Last month several securities exchanges in New York and Chicago announced plans to phase in over the next few years computerised, nighttime trading, to regain some of the business lost to foreign competitors.

But the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) an arm of Congress that analyses science and technology, says the change may be too slow in coming.

"It is by no means certain that U.S. markets will remain in the forefront of the movement toward round-the-clock global securities trading," noted the OTA, in a report.

In addition to competition already coming from exchanges in London and Tokyo, the report noted that Swiss, German and French exchanges "are making vigorous efforts to increase their volume, automate their activities and modernise their regulatory regimes" by 1992 when European trade barriers come down.

While U.S. futures exchanges and our over-the-counter market are acting aggressively to put worldwide electronic networks in place, the U.S. stock exchanges have been slower to act. Meanwhile, securities exchanges in many countries are moving toward highly automated markets," added the 106-page report, "Trading Around the Clock: Global Securities Markets and Information Technology."

Asked if it was fair to say the study indicated that American market mechanisms aren't ready yet to go global, Vary Coates, project director of the study said:

"I think that's fair enough. They've been slow to move in that direction — at least the exchanges are."

Officials at the New York Stock Exchange and the American Stock Exchange said they hadn't seen the report.

OTA officials noted that like all its reports, "trading around the clock" makes no recommendations to Congress but only lays out policy options.

"We say that international securities trading is increasing and will continue to increase and that two things then become important to congress: One is whether American markets are as competitive as they should be with regard to global trading. And secondly, what are the additional risks to American investors and financial institutions," said OTA's Ms. Coates.

He appealed for all hands to help with the grain harvest, which he said would certainly be "not bad" and better than the 211 million tonnes gathered last year.

But he said purchases by the state were going very slowly.

The government's failure to put more goods on shop shelves has caused many Soviet consumers to rally round Yeltsin, the

plan, which presumably needs parliamentary approval, has been handed to economic experts for refining, Interfax said.

Meanwhile, European Commission chief Jacques Delors said Friday moves by individual Soviet republics to create their own currencies could harm President Mikhail Gorbachev's reform

plan.

Delors, on his first official visit to Moscow, said he was surprised some Soviet republics wanted their own money.

"No federation can function if

Ryzhkov announces pay rise for 7 million Soviets

MOSCOW (R) — Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov, seeking support for his sluggish economic reform programme, announced a pay rise for seven million Soviet teachers, nurses and other workers Friday.

"It seems to me that, in the present state of economic reform, that would be something to worry about," he said.

The Ukraine, the second most important Soviet republic, said last week it planned to become a neutral state, assume the right to raise its own army and introduce a separate currency.

The Baltic republics have made similar declarations, while the biggest of the 15 constituent republics, the Russian Federation, alarmingly introduced private property rights for land and means of production, and study production assets, gold deposits, foreign debt and housing.

Under the programme, inefficient industries blamed for slow growth in industrial output would be axed or merged and shares, foreign investment, buyouts and various forms of credit would be introduced.

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End of Doe awaited as Liberian rebels advance into Monrovia

ABIDJAN (R) — Diplomats waited anxiously Saturday for the end of President Samuel Doe's embattled government in Liberia as rebel forces advanced into the capital Monrovia.

"We are all hoping that Doe will be killed or will leave the country quickly to get this over with as soon as possible," one Western diplomat told Reuters in neighbouring Ivory Coast.

Rebel forces besieging Monrovia captured the city's free port Friday. Bridges over the Mesurado River linking the city centre were littered with the bodies of government soldiers.

The United States, which has a naval task force cruising offshore, has offered to whisk Doe into exile, but U.S. Ambassador Peter de Voss was unable to see the president when he called at his heavily-guarded seaside mansion Friday.

Diplomats in Monrovia said Doe, a former army sergeant who

seized power in a bloody coup 10 years ago, was now a virtual prisoner of his own troops.

Most of those belong to Doe's Krahn tribe, which accounts for only five per cent of Liberia's 2.3 million population.

The diplomats said presidential bodyguards, fearing for their lives after a rebel takeover, were refusing to let Doe leave Monrovia without them.

The rebel National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) walked out of regionally-sponsored peace talks in neighbouring Sierra Leone Thursday saying it was determined to finish off Doe by force.

Chief rebel negotiator Tom Woeyi ruled out a ceasefire and warned other countries

against trying to intervene.

He specifically rejected suggestions that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) or the United States should send a peace-keeping force to Liberia to prevent a tribal massacre.

The seven-month-old civil war has turned into a tribal conflict, pitting Doe's Krahn tribe and the Mandingo Muslim trading community, which has prospered under Doe's government, against the Gio and Mano tribes which support the NPFL.

Both sides have committed tribal killings and although rebel leader Charles Taylor has pledged there will be no retribution against the Krahn and Mandingos when Monrovia falls, diplomats question whether he will be able to control his poorly-trained and loosely disciplined fighters.

Washington, which has close links with Liberia, a country

founded by freed U.S. slaves in 1847, is playing a key role behind the scenes in trying to end the fighting.

U.S. officials in Abidjan were tight-lipped Saturday about the situation in Liberia.

"There is no information that we have that we are in a position to share on any sort of basis," a U.S. embassy spokesman told Reuters.

Ghana announced it was sending a ship to collect its estimated 2,000 nationals from Liberia.

The official Ghana News Agency said Ghanaian citizens in Liberia were being urged to make their way to Sierra Leone, where the M.V. Tana River would pick them up Thursday.

It was not clear whether the ship would also call at Monrovia. Secretary for Foreign Affairs Obed Asamoah said Friday that Accra was still awaiting clearance to leave the Liberian government in the seven-month uprising against Indian rule.

Thousands of people shouting pro-independence slogans took part in a funeral procession to the graveyard, witnesses said.

More than 900 people have been killed since January when militants launched an open revolt in Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state.

Kashmiri militants have said they will intensify their campaign for independence or union with Pakistan in the weeks leading to India's independence day on Aug. 15.

Three bombs exploded in government offices in Srinagar late Friday but no one was hurt, the police official said.

A curfew remained in effect in Jammu city after violence hit the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir this week for the first time this year. Hindus are in a majority in the city.

But Bush cautioned Congress not to make extreme cuts in military hardware to accommodate friendlier superpower relations and budget constraints.

"The Soviets know what others do and so does this president," said the president, speaking at the nation's MX missile arsenal.

Addressing cuts in the committee made in his proposed defence budget last week for the year that

Labour lead over Conservatives grows in new poll

LONDON (AP) — The opposition Labour Party's lead over the governing Conservative Party has edged up two points to 13 per cent, according to a new opinion poll released Friday.

But the national opinion poll found that the conservatives apparently lost no ground from the July 14 resignation of Nicholas Ridley as trade and industry secretary amid protests over his views on Germany's role in Europe. Those remarks had been made in a magazine interview.

The party's standing, at 37 per cent, remains unchanged from a month ago. This figure is far healthier than the Conservatives' showing early this year, when polls put them a record 23 per cent behind the opposition.

The monthly survey for the independent newspaper and BBC-2's Newsnight programme contained uncomfortable news for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

It showed that if former Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine were Conservative leader, Labour's margin over the Conservatives would be cut to a mere four points. Heseltine is the front-runner to succeed Thatcher as party leader when she decides to step down.

The new findings, compared to last month's figures, are: Labour, 50 per cent (previously 48 per cent); Conservatives, 37 per cent (37 per cent); the centrist Liberal Democrats, 7 per cent (8 per cent); Greens, 3 per cent (4 per cent) and others, 3 per cent (3 per cent).

Bush said Friday he would begin the process of picking Brennan's successor at a White House meeting Saturday with his chief of

staff, John Sununu, Attorney General Dick Thornburgh and White House General Counsel C. Boyden Gray.

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